THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

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VOLUME VII

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UNITED STATES ARMY ASSININITY.

My attention has been called to a remarkable story published in the New York *Journal* of Oct. 4, in which is set forth at considerable length, the sorrows of one Lieut. C. E. Lang, of the U. S. Army. The tale may be told in less than a dozen lines: While a cadet at West Point, Lang became engaged to the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Commissary Sergeant Kenkel. The Superintendent sent for him and advised him to break off the match, because the young lady was not the social equal of such a Grand Panjandrum as a petty commissioned officer in Uncle Sam's army. Lang cared nothing for the inferior position held by his fiancee's father—he was not marrying the old man. Then followed systematic persecution by the Superintendent, who seems to have considered that Uncle Sam was paying him a fat salary to act as *arbiter elegantarium* and preserve the altitudinous social status of the service. On graduation day Lang married the girl, and has since been ostentatiously ostracised by his brother officers and discriminated against by the war department. I do not know whether the story be true. The New York press is nothing if not a sensation monger. It can build mountains out of molehills and lie *ad libitum* without the slightest compunction of conscience. Still, it is not impossible for it to occasionally tell the truth, or at least make a reasonable effort in that direction. Lieut. Lang has, throughout, declined to discuss the matter. He is evidently not posing as a martyr or making a bid for notoriety. The undis-

puted fact that West Point is, as one correspondent tersely puts it, a notorious " anglomanical dude hatchery," and social etiquette in military circles fearfully and wonderfully made, suggests to the average mind that, while the story may be improbable, it is still within the pale of the possible; and the latter fact is, of itself, enough to stir the blood of every American sovereign. I sincerely trust that the tale is at least an exaggeration. I should dislike to think that Uncle Sam has expended his substance nurturing a job-lot of ridiculous cads who are incapable of realizing that the daughter of the humblest laborer between the two oceans, if endowed with purity and intellect, is the equal of " the first lady of the land." I can scarce conceive of soldiers who have been proud to recognize as their commanders-in-chief a rail-splitter, a tanner and a mule-driver, ostracising a fellow officer for having wedded the beautiful and cultured daughter of a subordinate. But if the story be so much as founded on fact; if a sentiment so rankly unAmerican exists in army circles, Uncle Sam should read his upper-servants a lesson they will remember to the last day of their lives. His discourse should run somewhat as follows: Fair gentlemen, I educated, clothed and fed you at my own expense. I pay you fat salaries for looking pretty. When you are scarce past middle life I retire you on half-pay—relieve you of the arduous duty of doing nothing. Should you chance to rupture a blood-vessel while striking a particularly martial pose on dress parade or get kicked in the head by a marauding nightmare, I pay you or your heirs a liberal pension. Once in about 35 years some misguided nation treads on the narrative of my star-spangled Albert Edward and the controversy calls for ball cartridge. At such time I need you to drill my citizen soldiery and direct its strength. Occasionally a

commissioned officer gets killed; but, take it one year with another, there's no better life insurance risks on earth. In time of actual war your occupation is neither so arduous nor so dangerous as that of railway employees or metropolitan firemen. But should a stray bullet spoil your nobby uniform, your name is embalmed in song and story as a hero, your grown-up orphan children amply provided for and a grateful nation bedecks your monument with flowers and bedews your grave with tears; while forgetting the fireman who falls in a contest with a mightier foe, showering neither sympathy nor shekels on the family of the locomotive engineer who sacrifices his life for other's sake. Hundreds of the constabulary are done to death every year; where are the new-made graves of my petted and pampered army officers? You are always ornamental but seldom useful. You dance divinely, are in much demand at social "functions" and have sufficient tankage to hold your own for the glory of the service at the banquet board; but don't get puffed up with false pride. You are not the pillars upon which rests this Republic—else would it have been in a desperate plight when the better part of you slipped from under it in '61. In every scrimmage thus far I've had to rely upon officers who didn't know an echelon from an ichthyosaurian, a casemate from a cattleguard; but they got there just the same—there or thereabout. In a pinch I've had to commission men who had never heard of the tactics of Gen. Hardee—actually thought that war meant "giving the enemy hell!" Now, sweet gentlemen, don't try any iron-clad social distinctions while serving your Uncle Samuel. Sergeant Henkel was not educated at my expense, 'tis true; neither was Lincoln nor Garfield; still you managed to treat their offspring with considerable courtesy. I should dislike to think you a set of snobs,

who would have sneered at Garfield had you met him on the towpath, or at Lincoln had you caught him splitting rails, then crawled upon your well-filled bellies to the feet of these self-same men when they became your masters. I have noted with regret a disposition among you to consider yourselves superior to those you serve—or say, rather those who pay you salary for exhibiting your comely persons on dress-parade and playing poker; to establish a social dead-line between your elegant selves and those who are "in trade." It might be well for you to remember that a majority of you are the sons of small tradesmen, grizzled farmers who followed a mule team afield, and other humble but useful hewers of wood and drawers of water. If it "take three generations to make a gentleman," how many of my West Point charity scholars may safely sneer at the daughter of a commissary sergeant? It is well that you should feel some pride in your profession and discourage the introduction of unworthy people into the society of the army posts; but if the latter are to become hot-beds for the propagation of European priggishness we had best abolish them and give the society æsthetics an opportunity to cultivate their assininity at their own expense. Br'er Jonathan is big enough at present to take a club, and, by mere strength and awkwardness, wear out anything he's liable to run up against. Now beat to quarters, and let these few well-meant suggestions soak into you.

SLANDERING THE SOUTH.

SOUTHERN COLONELS WHO LOVE THE COON.

Colonel Watterson of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, Belo of the Galveston-Dallas *News*, Grice of the San Antonio *Daily Excuse* and sundry other southern "colonels" who never cocked a cannon, have suddenly developed a passionate love for the coon. Once their *bete-noire*, the Ethiop is now the object of their tearful adoration. They have become the nights-errant of the nigger. They feel that they have a kick coming because they were not born black. They have the walls of their sanctums hung with portraits of "The Distinguished Colored Men of America," while upon their writing desks, as perennial founts of inspiration, stand the busts of Ida Wells and Ossawattomie Brown. They will not publish an editorial that has not been revised by a nigger politician, nor carry a handkerchief until it has been worn a week in the stocking of a yaller gal, to give to it the coveted perfume. They cultivate the nigger dialect by day and dream of colored houris by night. Once they seriously doubted whether the Afric. had a soul; now they grudgingly concede that a Caucasian may be good as a coon if he behaves himself—and votes for Bill McKinley. Verily, politics makes strange bedfellows! Four years ago they were bitterly denouncing the Tourgees and Cockerills as "defamers of the south," for proclaiming it as the land of systematic election frauds; now they are out-heroding Herod, out-tourgeeing Tourgee. They are crying aloud that the South has been too long disgraced by ballot-boxing stuffing and intimidation, and darkly hinting that the re-enactment of the force bill may be necessary to purify our politics. Their conversion is sudden as that of

Saul. They have seen "a great light," and repented them in sack-cloth and ashes of having stoned the Rpublican prophets. The Ethiops are the people, the white Democrats the millstone about the neck of Dixie. There appears to have been a veritable camp meeting revival of "political honesty" among the editors of the South's great diurnals. How much of this is due to the tearful jeremiads of Rev. Sam Jones, and how much to Mark Hanna's money I will not presume to say; but the fact remains that the journals mentioned have deserted the white Democracy, gone over bag and baggage to the coon camp and are now striving to convince the world that the reconstruction era was a golden age, that since it passed the South has been dominated by professional thugs and political thieves.

I admit that in some sections of the South there has not been "an honest ballot and a fair count" since the war. Self-preservation is nature's first law. It is above and beyond all codes and constitutions. The South has been called upon to deal with conditions that contravened the theories of the Conscript Fathers. In many sections the blacks are in an overwhelming majority, and, whenever permitted the free exercise of political power, have wrought disgrace and ruin. It became necessary to practically disfranchise them in the interest of good government. The Caucasian was compelled to choose between two evils—that of legal damnation and unlawful salvation. He decided to protect his property, that—constitutions and conditions to the contrary—he was entitled to the enjoyment of life and liberty; so he counted Mr. Coon out and supported this illegality when necessary with the shotgun. He felt that the end justified the means. The history of Harrison county, Texas, is similar to that of hundreds of other Southern communities. It has a population of 19,000 negroes and but 11,000 whites. From the

close of the war until 1878 it was at the mercy of the blacks and carpet-baggers. The result was a carnival of crime, an era of unspeakable lawlessness and corruption. County scrip went begging at 15 cents on the dollar. Property depreciated in value. A vast debt accumulated. Business stagnated and industry went unrewarded. By buying, bluffing and "doctoring" the election returns, the whites were able to regain control and keep it. County scrip quickly went to par. Business revived. The great burthen of debt was rapidly reduced. The public schools were improved, and a veritable hell-hole of pauperism, ignorance and crime became a prosperous, law-abiding community. Every well-informed man knows that hundreds of Southern communities have been compelled to resort to similar methods to avoid the damning blight of negro domination. By such methods was Texas rescued from the corrupt rule of the Davis régime. By such methods were other Southern states purged of the parasites that were preying upon their substance and making their names a byword and a reproach, a shaking of the heads to the nations. It was a life-and-death struggle, and we employed such weapons as we could command. It was useless to appeal to the reason of the goddess of Unreason, to the honesty of the avatar of Corruption, to the intelligence of the incarnation of Ignorance, to the pride and patriotism of a people but just released from centuries of slavery. We were compelled to fight the devil with fire. To paraphrase Tennyson,

> Our honor rooted in dishonor stood,
> And faith unfaithful kept us falsely true.

Of course we could have respected the Fourteenth Amendment. We could have obeyed the law to the letter. We could have turned our property over to a coterie of

imported criminals and a horde of black barbarians, fled the country, began life anew in some other land, leaving our beloved Dixie to darkness and the devil. But had we done so; had we receded before the invasion of reconstruction vandals and the insolence of an inferior race, could there have been found in all the earth a Caucasian so poor in racial price as to have uttered the once potent name of Southern Chivalry with respect? We were here first, and did not propose to be driven out. We redeemed this country from the wilderness, fought for it with savage beasts and still more savage men. It held the sacred dust of our dead. Here rose our roof-tree, here our flowers bloomed and here our babes were born. We could not remain if subjected to negro rule and ruin, and from this in the fundamental law of the land was found no relief. We did what the whites of the North, what the whites of any portion of God's earth would have done if similarly situated, and for excuse we point to the happy, peaceful and prosperous condition of the South to-day.

To be sure, there is corruption in white government as well as in black. In breaking the power of the carpet-bagger we did not inaugurate the Saturnian age; but we did avoid that deep damnation to which negro domination was surely dragging us. In most Southern counties the necessity for such irregular methods of protection from despoiliation has gone by. It is charged that the machinery once employed against the negro is sometimes trained by the whites against each other. There is not a state in the Union in which charges of fraud are not preferred against each other by the opposing political parties. Far north of the Ohio men have been convicted of ballot-box stuffing or perpetrating election frauds, not to protect their altars and their fanes, not that a great evil might result in greater good, but for their private gain. In this respect

the South may well challenge comparison with any section of our common country. Watterson, Belo, et al know this full well. Time and again have they declared it when conditions were far worse than they are to-day; but to defeat Bryan and elect the candidate of those corporations upon whose crumbs they fatten, they hasten to hold their country up to the world's contumely. They applaud the infamous utterances of Ida Wells and encourage that reverend nonentity, Sam Jones, to rupture his putrid bowels in an effort to further befoul his own nest. But what better could we expect of the Gal-Dal *News*, alias the "Old Lady," which applauded Ethiop orators when they declared Fred Douglass, the mulatto miscegenationist, the peer of Washington and Lincoln, and expressed an ambition to secure white wives for themselves? What better could we expect of a sheet that, having been subsidized by the railways to oppose the will of the people, and convicted of that offense, had the unparalleled audacity to openly *defend the sale of editorial influence as legitimate journalism?* I knew the "Old Lady" was a wanton, but hitherto supposed her possessed of sufficient good taste to confine her favors to white folks, instead of peddling her faded charms among the niggers for stray nickels and publicly mouthing and mumbling her political paramours.

* * *

THE HOLY BIBLE.

The Bible is both the Word of God and the Oracle of the Devil. In other words, it is the utterance of the noblest thoughts and basest passions of man, a creature half divine, half infernal, partaking both of the spirit of the upper and the nether world. It is the record of a bar-

barous people, isolated and developing, not by internal force or special illumination, but whose industrial and political life, whose theological and moral conceptions were acted and reacted upon from without by widely divergent nations, types of culture and modes of thought.

It is impossible at this late day to trace with anything approaching accuracy the growth of that religion of which the Bible is the repository; but even a cursory examination of the book itself indicates that, like all other religions that have attained to more than ephemeral existence, it grew slowly and underwent many important modifications; that it was at its genesis no concrete thing handed down from heaven, fixed, unalterable, preternaturally wise and good. Jehovah was probably at first but the God of a powerful Semitic family. As the Jews were brought together in something like unity he developed into a National Deity, whose chief vocation was to guard the material interests of his "chosen people." When the Jews departed from Egypt and settled in Canaan, they evidently transferred to Jehovah many of the attributes of Baal; and there are traces in the later conceptions of this Deity of the influence of other ethnic rites, even of Fetichism and Sabianism. Even in the latest books of the Bible the conception of Jehovah—who had then become the God of all nations and peoples, but with a strong predilection for the Jews—is a strange blending of the spiritual and the grossly material, of greatness and puerility, of the sublime and the ridiculous. When the New Testament took form the conception of the Deity had assumed a more exalted character; but even now the God usually pictured by pulpiteers is not a being we can well afford to be proud of.

The strangest thing about the early biblical religion is the fact that it did not recognize the immortality of the

soul. Its whole teaching was that when the grave closed over a man that was the last of him. The rewards of well-doing were not heaven and eternal life, but prosperity on earth, graciously continued as an inheritance to the good man's posterity. From what source the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was introduced into the cultus of Jehovah is by no means clear; but that it was received from without instead of being evolved from within must be evident to every careful student of the Bible. Doubtless the Jews owe their chief tenet of their present religious faith to the "heathen," whom they did not always despise so heartily as a cursory examination of Hebraic literature might lead one to suppose.

To the Christian world the Messianic prophecies are popularly supposed to be by far the most important part of Hebrew scripture,—an altogether mistaken opinion resulting from blind zeal, not untainted with gross stupidity. There is not a line of prophecy in the Old Testament, which a competent critic will allow to the age assigned it, that any honest exegete will apply to Christ. The gentleman who put the Messianic sign-posts over so many chapters in our modern Bibles richly deserved the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. "Overlooking," says Rev. Canon Farrar, "the prophetic passages which told of a suffering Messiah, a servant of Jehovah, who should bear the sorrows of his people, the Jews were anticipating the advent of some temporal sovereign who would rule their enemies with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, while he raised Israel to the summit of earthly prosperity and luxury." Canon Farrar is unquestionably a learned and able man, yet is it not possible that the Jews understood those "prophetic passages"—or at least such of them as were not introduced into the original text at a late day—much better than he? When we remember that

the printing press is a late invention; that early copiests took strange liberties; that even Josephus' text was garbled to bolster up the theory of Christ's divinity and add importance to his labors, we may well be a trifle doubtful of "prophetic passages" that the subtle Jewish scribes, as well as such authors as Tacitus, Suetonius and other great secular writers of that period who touched upon the subject, "overlooked." Most remarkable is it that if Christ was really the Messiah promised by Hebrew prophecy, the Jews have not discovered the fact.

The New Testament is generally supposed to complement the old; Judaism is regarded as the root of which Christainity is the stem; but such is not really the case. They are two separate and distinct plants of the same genus but of different species. The relation of the two books is a strained and unnatural one—something like the blending of a Masonic lodge and the Salvation army. Judaism and Christianity, as set forth in the Old and New Testaments, are composite religions, made up of a variety of elements that even long periods of time, synods, ecumenical councils and secular authority have not succeeded into bringing into perfect harmony. Christianity undoubtedly owes much to Judaism, but its relations thereto is not that of Protestantism to Catholicism. It owes far more in the aggregate to Gentile speculation than to the Hebrew prophets.

To accept all portions of the Bible as literally or even relatively true is nothing short of blasphemy, an insult to the Creator; to reject the book altogether were like casting away a priceless pearl because it is covered with ocean slime. The Bible is a vast mine in which, mixed with much worthless rock and debris, there is wellnigh exhaustless store of yellow gold. Let him who would possess true wealth not neglect to dig assiduously; not blindly, believing

every boulder his pick strikes to be a nugget of pure metal and thus loading himself with worthless rubbish. There are great truths in the Bible. It matters not whether they were revealed to Hebrew prophets in delirious trance-visions or borrowed of gentile philosophers who had painfully worked them out by long years of study. There they are, with the stamp of God upon them, as it is upon all Truth, even the most trifling. To whom they were revealed, when, by what means, matters not; they are now the heritage of the world. Let no man refuse the bequest.

Deep pools of wisdom there are in that strange old book; insight preternaturally keen into that greatest of earthly mysteries—the Life of Man. Beautiful things there are too—sometimes appearing as restful valleys amid the awful grandeur of thunder-riven mountains; sometimes like oasis in a desert waste of dead formalities, dreary desolations of impossible genealogies and awful chasms of hideous superstition. Inspired? Is not all speech inspired? If not of God, then of the devil? of the good and true in man, else of the base and false? What boots it whether the finger of God or the burin of Moses wrote the decalogue? Is it not wise and true; therefore Divine and to be accepted by all men? What matters it whether Elijah was caught up into heaven in a chariot of fire or ran counter of a whirlwind? What care we who wrote the Pentateuch,—or in what year? If the Devil told us that the sun doth shine should we not believe him? If an angel from heaven told us the contrary should we not discredit him?

FACT AND FANCY.

PERHAPS the unkindest thing yet said of me is that I wage war upon religion—that I insult and ridicule the Christian ministry. From various preachers I gather that the ICONOCLAST would have the world discard law and government, clothing and Christianity, marriage and morals, and plunge back into naked barbarism and licentious free-love. But nothing was created altogether in vain. Without liars, what would become of our politics? My only quarrel with the ministry is that too many of its members are unworthy their high calling; are too much given to dogmatizing about the Deity instead of teaching the religion of brotherly love—too often mistake the husks of creed for the kernel of the Christian cult. Many people appear to think a preacher infallible; that, like the king, he can do no wrong—that to criticize the clergy were well-nigh as blasphemous as to speak disrespectfully of the the Devil and Hell, or insist that the Creator of the Cosmos is better than the Biblical conception. There are a great many grand and noble men in the ministry; but there are also many hacking 'round with their little hoes in the Lord's vineyard who would do much more effective work in the cotton-patch—or penitentiary. I have offended many worthy people by criticizing the sensational preacher or whoop-la evangelist; but, in all candor, I consider such ministers a disgrace to the cloth, an injury to the cause of Christ. When a man must adopt the methods of the mountebank to persuade people to observe him, he should doff his canonicals and seek a situation as spouter for a snake sideshow. When you have to go after a sinner with a circus tent and street slang, it were well to consider if the game be worth the candle. When you have to turn the house of God into a freak museum to induce people to

enter it, it might be good policy to permit them to remain beyond its portals. When you have to work sinners into a nervous frenzy to start them along the rugged path of duty, it were well to bring up the rear with a revolver if you would have them long continue climbing. The reaction from machine-made attacks of moral hysteria usually carries a community several degress nearer Hell than before it was evangelized. If we could but get rid of the Talmages, Parkhursts, Jones and other empty blatherskites, impudent sensation-mongers and vulgar slang-slingers who are making religion a cloak for their infernal fakes, and fill their pulpits with profound and progressive men like Beecher and self-sacrificing souls like Pere Marquette, we could easily " capture the world for Christ."

. . .

What the world needs is more practical, broad-gauge Christianity and less hide-bound dogmatism; more substance and less ceremony; more hard hustling and less hacking at the Lord for help; more Good Samaritanism and less holier-than-thou Pharisaism. Maybe a man can be a consistent Christian and keep his clutches on a million or more o' money while people are suffering for the crudest creature comforts; but I don't believe it. That simile of its being easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a plutocrat the celestial portals, has been comfortably explained away by plutocratic preachers; but, between you and I, it is evident that Christ intended to intimate pretty plainly that human hogs are not wanted in heaven.

. . .

I do not assail the church, nor society, nor civilization. How can I? The good and the bad, the false and the true are so inextricably blended that to approve were fatuous, to condemn were folly. Draw the line between right and

wrong, between friend and foe, and there follows the battle's splendor, the ring of Christian sword on Saracen shield; but how meet and confute a proposition that's half a truth, yet all a falsehood? How deal with a society that is so much better than subter-brutishness, yet makes men but machines? An industrial system that makes the desert to blossom as the rose and fills the land with luxury, yet starves labor? How proclaim as idle mummery a science which computes the procession of the planets and weighs the suns; which harnesses the bolts of Imperial Jove to the jaunting-car, makes even the winds and waves toil for man, yet reduces God's great universe to a soulless automaton—a *mechanique celeste?* How bid the Car of Progress stand like Joshua's moon in Ajalon, even when we know that it is carrying us ever further from that Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man which is the core of Christianity—cleaving the human race into two great classes, cursed by mutual fear and hate, and of whose Need and Greed, Want and Wealth will yet be born a titanic Reign of Terror that will sweep it back a thousand years on the crimson crest of a wave of blood and fire?

. . .

I do not expect to altogether exterminate falsehood from the world. Lying has become a kind of second nature to the majority of mankind and crops out almost unconsciously. But if we cannot at once reform the world we can at least teach our children that a lie, of whatsoever kind or color, class or condition, is a lie just the same—an epistle of evil, proclaiming that here, in one of his Protean shapes, is the Devil, a fraud and a fake, a cheat and a coward. When Truth dominates the world and Falsehood is scourged from the senate chamber, the sanctum and the sanctuary, then will the tweedledum of Republicanism and the Tweedledee of Democracy no longer fill the land

of foolish strife, causing the supposedly intelligent American sovereign to fracture his lungs howling for his own economic hanging; to make a disgusting distillery of his stomach and an illogical hurdy-gurdy of his head—for the good of the party! Then will sectaries no longer waste in warring upon each other strength that should be expended caging the Devil for a dime museum. Then may an honestly Doubting Thomas ask to see the nail—prints in the palms of his risen Lord without engendering the awful suspicion that he is carrying a dynamite bomb in his coat-tail pocket for the Christian cultus. Then will Friendship become something more than a polite sham, Marriage more than a civil contract. Then will the Uranian supplant the Pandemian Venus on Love's long dishonored throne, purify the polluted shrine and kindle anew the celestial flame upon its sacred altar. Then will we cease to measure men by artificial and arbitrary standards, to interpret their every act by rules forged in the foul stithy of Unbelief. Then will "the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool" cease to be the open sesame to the most select society. Then will preachers cease polluting their pulpits with the infamous falsehoods of partisan politics, and editors inquire diligently what is true and subservient of the public weal rather than what will promote the fortunes of this or the other coterie of impudent politicians—giving it opportunity for plunder.

. . .

Ninety-and-nine out of every hundred of us are wasting upon childish trifles the strength given us for the work of men—and every heart-beat bearing us across Time's narrow boundary into the broad bosom of an eternity that hath no shore. And what is it we seek so assiduously that we are thus willing to waste our lives, to sacrifice our independence and become canting hypocrites—cowards, trem-

bling before the adverse criticism of fellows as foolish as ourselves? Why is it that we strive to impress the very bootblacks with an exaggerated idea of our importance? That we want everybody—the tax-collector alone excepted—to believe that we are wealthier than we are?—pretend to knowledge we do not possess, parrot phrases we cannot comprehend, remain ignorant all the days of our lives rather than acknowledge our intellectual bankruptcy and ask for information? Say it in one word—Happiness. Our infinitesimal souls seek delight in the gratification of a vicious Vanity. We realize that we don't amount to much and are ever fearful that our fellows will find it out. Hence, we buy $100 overcoats and go without undershirts, put costly plumes in our hats when there are holes in our only pair of stockings; say "my dear," "honey" and "lovey" to the good wife in company, then growl at her like a cur with the colic when the last guest has gone. We waste our lives enacting a foolish farce and vainly trying to make the world believe it a reality. And still we're not happy—nor do we deserve to be so. The good wife feels that life is scarce worth the living because her new bonnet cost but $7, while Mrs. Parvenue's cost $70. Hubby, poor man, thinks marriage a miserable failure because his partner is jealous or his victuals don't agree with him; is wretched because business is bad; because the political boomlet, which cost him so much to build, got lost in the brush, or the Morning Bugle-Blast berated him. O the woe and wail of this weary-work-a-day world!

. . .

Riches being but a doubtful blessing, eternal fame unattainable—the poets to the contrary notwithstanding—death not to be dodged nor heaven attained by subterfuge, why should we not be men and women instead of frauds and fakes? Why not tell the truth ever and always,

though we lost thereby the custom of Crœsus, offend against the foolishly artificial canons of the Four Hundred and find our blessed little political boom in the boullion? Why pip and whimper and play policy for stakes so pitiful? Why crouch and cower at the clayey feet of inept idols? Why bid the ransom of an immortal soul against the doubtful glory of being, for a few brief moons, big duck in some pitiful little mud-puddle, lead gander of a flock of foolish geese, or chief attraction in some Cheap John museum of moral mendicants? Why go rainbow chasing after that receding happiness which the Prince of Hell is forever painting on a background of blank despair? "Oh, but," says one, "your doctrine is well enough in theory; but should we attempt to put it in practice we would get the worst of it. We would find ourselves without customers or clients, and might suck our thumbs and chew the fag-end of hope deferred for sustenance. It will never do!" Then indeed are ye damned; for it is the doctrine of that Christ you profess to adore, of that God you pretend to glorify—that God who hath launched his anathemas against all forms of fraud, and placed the brand of infamy upon the liar's brow.

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BOLTING POPULIST BOSSES.

The would-be bosses of the Texas populists are advising them to vote for high-tariff, gold-standard, monopoly-owned Bill McKinley, instead of for the eloquent advocate of low-tariff, free-silver, income tax and rigid economy in the administration of government, "because"—says the plenary committee—"the election of Bryan will kill the Populist party!" How in the world did this bob-tailed junta manage to accumulate so much political wisdom?

On October 13th, the national executive committee declared that, by subordinating partisanship to patriotism and helping elect Bryan, the Populist party would *become the party of the future.* It pointedly rebuked such mischief-makers as those now carrying the McKinley banner; and well it might, for they are bolters, disorganizers who are striving to wreck the party upon the rocks to magnify their own political importance. The little fellows, who constitute the trading committee, are flying about like three bad smells in a hot skillet, advising Texas Populists to do what? To "preserve their party"—by turning Republican! to secure a glorious triumph for the Omaha platform by voting down its every demand! to enhance their self-respect by giving their suffrages to a gang of professional pie-grafters who denounce them as knaves or laugh at them as lunatics! to send the nation to hell in a handbasket because they cannot, with one pull, place it in the seventh heaven! They insist that the only way to secure the sub-treasury is to solemnly indorse the single-gold standard. This is the theory of *similia similibus curantur* for your whiskers! Bryan can kill the Populist party in one way only—by carrying out those great reforms for which it has so long been clamoring. If he does this, the Populist party will no longer have a valid excuse for its existing upon the earth—its work will be done, its mission ended. The little bosses complain bitterly that the Democrats have stolen certain important "planks" from the Populist platform. Suppose they have. On those points you now have a powerful ally where lately you found an enemy. If the aforesaid "planks" were intended to benefit the people, instead of simply acting as stepping-stones upon which a few men hoped to mount to power, would you not be pleased to have every party approve them, so that, no matter which way the battle

went, the condition of the country might be bettered? If the Populist party be correctly represented by its plenary committee it deserves to be killed, buried face down in a dunghill and a fence rail run through it to prevent resurrection, for it is simply a gang of political pirates, as destitute of patriotism as even Teddy Green's nigger Republicans. Men who prefer the preservation of a partisan organization to the welfare of the people are either idiots or public enemies. I do not believe that the Texas Populists are owned by the political panders who are hawking their ballots about Republican headquarters. No man of honesty and intelligence can vote for both Kearby and McKinley. Teddy's niggers may do it, for they've got no morals; Clark's soreheads may do so, for they have no sense. Kearby and McKinley—the syncretism of the century. A combination equivalent to that of virtue and vice, of light and darkness, of Deity and Devil! Each is the exact antithesis of the other. Supporting both were like hitching an ox to one end of an apple-cart, an ass to the other, and driving in different directions. And this is what the plenary committee calls progress! The bosses would place you on a pedestal in sight of heaven and earth, with your panties at half-mast—a spectacle for gods and men—would make of you the prize jackassi of your day an generation. Whether the Populists of Texas be patriots or only partisans, they must vote for Bryan. Why? Because he is the best available representative of those principles of which they are the propagandists—because he has accepted the better part of their platform, while the other candidates treat it with contempt. Because he is the nominee of their party, and refusal to support him would land them outside its pale. The national executive committee says truly that "there are but two sides in the conflict that is being waged in this country to-day"—

that of the plutocrats and the people. "Between these two there is no middle ground." In other words, when you vote for McKinley you are no longer a Populist—are welcome to "take a few coals and go make a little hell of your own." Your party will none of you, for you have abjured its principles, done the Benedict Arnold act and deserted in the face of the enemy—declared in favor of billion dollar congresses, high-tariff, more bond issues to bolster up a valetudinarian gold-reserve, the perpetuation of national banks of issue, the permanent demonetization of silver and a steadily contracting currency. Now take your choice between the national and the plenary committees—between the plutocrats and the people, between slavery and sovereignty, between honor and infamy.

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SALMAGUNDI.

"If you want a kiss, why take it," has been adopted as motto for the great seal of Pennsylvania. If you feel the need of a little osculatory exercise you have only to grab the first fair maid you chance to meet, hug her like a grisly bear embracing a tenderfoot, browse on her ruby lips until your chin-whiskers drips honey-dew, and the law will hold you harmless. Whether this be a carefully concocted scheme to induce masculine immigration, or simply the result of free-love proclivities on the part of Mathew Stanley Quay, the social and political censor of the Keystone State, I know not; but such is the situation, as may be gleaned from the action of the grand jury of Alleghaney county in a recent kissing case. Rev. H. G. Bond, pastor of the Library Baptist church, was charged with assault and battery by two young ladies,

members of his church. The information sworn to by Ida B. Riggs, and reported in the Pittsburg *Post*, indicates that Bond is a gay bird—even for a Baptist:

"On or about the 15th day of May, 1896, the above named defendant did then and there assault me and grab me, forcing me to him in a violent manner, and kissing me twice, saying that he had not slept with his wife for two months, asking me if he could not come back and see me when we could have a nice time, when he was not afraid of being seen by anyone."

Not receiving any encouragement from Ida, he tackled her sister Alta and according to her sworn statement, got two resounding smacks, and suggestive compliments, despite the indignation of the kissee. Whether the amorous doctor of divinity next tackled the old lady or the colored cook, deponent saith not. The grand jury, after carefully considering the complaints, decided that kissing was not in violation of the laws of Pennsylvania, made and provided, nor inimical to the peace and dignity of the commonwealth, and declined to find a true bill against the false Dr. Bond. Whether this privilege of promiscious osculation extends to others than members of the Baptist ministry we are not informed; but may presume that, in the enjoyment of life's choicest luxuries, all stand equal before the law. I am a trifle doubtful whether I should print this article or not, fearing that when the remarkable attractions which Pennsylvania offers as a place of residence becomes known, every Baptist preacher in Texas will make a bee-line for that favored state, with Dr. Jehovah Boanerges Cranfill leading the procession on his bike. There's a possibility that we will not be able to retain a pastor at any price, and the Apostle have to take the deserted congregations under his sheltering wing, and conduct services for the benefit of the sisters and such

lay-brethren as cannot join the hegira until they have cashed in their cotton.

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The *Gal-Dal News* continues to throw sun-flowers at itself because of its "political fairness," as evidenced by its publication of the speeches of candidates Bryan and Culberson! There is not a "yap" editor in Texas who could be guilty of such a idiocy. The Gal-Dal pretends to be a newspaper. As such, it can only serve its own business interests by printing what the people desire to read. A Texas daily that refused to give reasonably full reports of the speeches of Bryan and Culberson would not last so long as the traditional snowball in Tartarus, and this the *News* right well knows. Its pitiful attempt to make a virtue of necessity is calculated to make the burro of Texas tired.

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Archbishop Ireland does not preach political sermons, but exercises his prerogative as an American citizen to express his opinion of secular matters in the press. He opines that supreme unction might as well be administered to Uncle Sam unless McKinley is elected and the gold standard maintained. This recalls the old-time tiffs between the Republican archbishop and his father, a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat. On one occasion the old man lost patience with his son's political perversity and wrathfully exclaimed: "John Oireland! if we wasn't the aninted av the Lord, oi'd break your dom neck for bein' a fool!" After reading the archbishop's last article, I am inclined to think the Lord would have forgiven the father had his contempt for the politician overcome his respect for the priest.

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I used to know in Galveston a nice, dapper little thing called J. Goodrich Jones. "It" as we called it around the newspaper offices, parted its name on the side, its hair in the middle, and, while too utterly too-too for anything, was regarded as harmless and allowed to run at large. I lost sight of J. Goodrich and naturally supposed that somebody had either stepped on or stolen him; but he subsequently turned up at Temple and, much to my delight, became the proud daddy of "Arbor Day," the doting father of incipient forests which, in a century or so, will cast their grateful shade over perhaps half a section. I had not suspected him of being capable of daddying anything—had quite overlooked the fact that he belonged to the fecund family of Jones. Temple's little nemophilist, or he-wood-nymph, has again distinguished himself—has held converse with the man in the moon. True, he is not the first Texan to be favored with a lunar *tête-à-tête;* but what his idea lacks in originality his report makes up in charming imbecility. The moon was evidently either full, or joshing Jonesie. A sober moon would scarce have rehashed for a great daily idle speculations anent its own origin and condition which had done duty in all the plate-matter weekly papers, nor mistaken for a stripling a man in middle life. But perchance J. Goodrich, in his proverbial innocence was mistaken in his caller's sex. The man in the moon may have been absent, attending a rehearsal of "Midsummer Night's Dream"—or seeking with thornbush and lantern that cheerful idiot who wrote an alleged song about his lunar sweetheart—leaving Dian on deck. It were not to be wondered at that the chaste huntress should strike up a conversation with Jonesy, for she was ever partial to beautiful boys. As he lay in his hammock and watched with his soulful blue eyes the great orb of night rolling

in silent majesty along its path of astral fire, she may have mistaken him for her gentle shepherd boy and stolen a shy kiss from his perfumed mutton-chops. I suspect that was the way of it—that, drunk with the bliss of a stolen *tête-à-tête* with her true love, she talked politics to conceal her confusion, while all her thoughts were of boys. Naturally she would say something about "Willie" Bryan; but somehow she overlooked the number of other raw youths whom she must have known. There was Willie Shakespeare, for instance, whose wonderful precocity enabled him to write "Richard III" and "Merchant of Venice" at 30, "Hamlet" and "Julius Caesar" at 36. Then there was Willie Pitt, a very pretty youth of 22, Tommy Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence at 32; and a host of other forward kids, from Roscius down to Teddy Green, who persisted in making themselves officious at an age when they should have been adorned with fresh diapers and dandled on the knee of a French nurse. I presume that when Jefferson drew up that immortal document which marked a new epoch in human history, the tories had an acute attack of the "tommies," just as the red-muzzled little dudes and other anglomaniacal wiggletails of our day are afflicted with the "willies."

J. Goodrich should give all the power of his majestic mind to the esoteric science of tree-planting. Should he find himself again becoming moon-mad and liable to rush in among the contending Titans like a brindle doodle-bug mixing it with angry elephants, he might tie his coat-tails in a double bow-knot around the monarch of his own artificial forest, and thus, like another Odysseus, hold himself in check until the danger is past.

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The convention of Texas' Baptists in convention assembled at Houston, had a good, old-fashioned jouring

match over the manner in which the missionary collections are managed. Rev. M. D. Early, who superintends the work, reported that the collections during the year amounted to $11,000, the expense necessary to wring this amount from the chubby hand of childhood, $1,000. Do the Baptist pastors charge a percentage for taking up collections "for Christ"? If not, where does the "expense" of making collections come in? And when to this expense is added Early's salary of $2,000 per annum, that of his clerks and the cost of keeping the dead-horse Missionary Messenger afloat, how much of this $11,000, of which the babies have been bilked, is left for Jesus? Now mark you, I war upon nothing that is calculated to promote the Christian cause; but the more I see of these missionary societies the more firmly I am convinced that they are deliberate frauds.

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Rev. Henry A. Koehler, long a leading light of the A.P.A., has at last become disgusted with his company, cut it cold and confessed under oath that he has uttered a thousand-and-one lies against the Roman Catholic church. Koehler is, or was, a preacher who posed as an ex-priest and revealed to wondering yaps the "awful secrets of the confessional"—for a consideration. He admits that he was never a priest, nor in any way connected with a Catholic institution, and begs the church to forgive his infamous falsehoods. He should be granted absolution at once—then placed in Price's old cell in the penitentiary. It is as impossible to reform such a character as Koehler as to make a good omelet of a bad egg. The rats are simply deserting the sinking ship. The Ape is coming off its perch because the people are aweary of its infernal foulness and will no longer feed it for defaming the brides of God and striving to subvert the

American government. Its chief apostles have proven adventurers, ignorami, criminals, or all combined; its papers are rapidly going where the woodbine twineth, leaving behind them large coteries of angry creditors; the howl of its orators is almost hushed, and even its "ex-nuns" are returning to their old trade and peddling lubricity instead of retailing lies.

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A trust deed for $30,000, covering its plant, has been filed by the Houston *Post*. No daily paper can prosper in the territory of the Galveston-Dallas *News*. The attempt to build up at Houston successful opposition to the double-ender must finally result as did a similar foolish venture at Forth Worth. If I might presume to advise the *Post* people, I would urge them to consolidate their paper with Madame Palmer's Texas *World* as a weekly. Her business snap and editorial ability would eventually pull it out of the financial bogs.

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Mr. Brann: I see it frequently stated that England is behind the American free silver movement. Is this true?

IRISH CATHOLIC.

Col. Pat Ford's paper, the *Irish World*, is considered high authority by most Irish Catholics on matters pertaining to English policy, hence I will let it answer your question. The *Irish World* is supporting McKinley solely because, like most Eastern papers, it is radically protectionist, and believes the tariff is to be the paramount question before the people. It says in its issue of Oct. 10: "England is the great creditor nation, and draws tribute from almost all the peoples of the world. As such, she sees that it is to her selfish interest to contract

the volume of money throughout the world, knowing that such contraction will enrich her money-lenders by appreciating the value of their loans. Hence England, or the class that dominates her monetary system, wants the gold system established and perpetuated. Through England's influence France, Germany and the United States have followed suit. They are now in the toils and are chafing to get back to the bimetallic standard, that is, to restore silver to its former place in the monetary system. The representative of the force which in this country is most urgent in the restoration of silver in the monetary system is Mr. Bryan, and from this point of view Mr. Bryan is regarded with disfavor in England."

It is needless to say that the people do not agree with Col. Ford regarding the relative importance of the tariff and currency questions, but insist that the latter is the leading issue, and that all others may well be allowed to wait. Col. Ford frankly admits that, so far as currency is concerned, Bryan is right and McKinley wrong—that it is the eloquent Nebraskian vs. grasping John Bull. It is claimed that a vast sum of British capital is invested in American silver mines. I do not doubt it—there is scarce an American industry which is not paying tribute to English creditors. It must be borne in mind, however, that this indebtedness is usually in the shape of mortgage bonds bearing a fixed interest rate, whether the investment be in railways, breweries, coal or silver mines, and that the mortgagor naturally favors money of increasing purchasing power. There is not, so far as I know, a single American silver mine owned by English non-residents. There is no more reason why the British holder of silver mine bonds should favor the free coinage of the white metal than that those should do so whose money is invested in American farm mortgages.

See the point? If you do, drive it into the ligneous head of your McKinleyite neighbor before election day.

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One of the most transparent, yet most successful of modern frauds, is the sectarian weekly. Its ostensible mission is the spread of the gospel, but it is almost invariably, out for the stuff. No one in ten deals honestly by either subscriber or advertising patron. When once your name is entered as subscriber to a sectarian paper the paper is harder to get rid of than a tax-collector or an evil reputation. If you order it for three months, you are "stuck" for life. When you die it goes to your heirs or assigns, and when they pass from earth the postman reverently places it on their sarcophagi. Bills and tearful begging letters are sent out once a quarter; but you are not really expected to respond. Of course, the publisher calles you "dear brother" in every epistle, and assures you that he "cannot keep up the good fight" unless you supply the sinews of war; but the chances are that you are having troubles of your own, and give the Scimetar of Sanctification or Sacred Sad-iron to the gude wife to paper the pantry, or use it for purposes less polite. And it keeps coming—bearing its weekly burthen of unmitigated bosh. The publisher figures that if one in five responds with the ducats he's ahead of the deal. He keeps your name on his subscription books in the humble hope that some day your conscience will get to hurting you so bad that you'll sell the cook-stove and send him the cash—all for Christ. If you peremptorily demand that he cease sending the paper, he cites the law "for the protection of the publishers" and as you cannot mortgage your homestead to pay up arrearages, you continue to take the *Hypocrite's Own* and wish its editor in hell. He sends it, not because he has the ghost of an

idea that you are ass enough to read it; but because it enables him to prove up "a tremendous circulation" and elongate the guileless advertiser's leg. The *Baptist Standard* is a case in point. Its publisher—one of those dear good men who are forever weeping for the sins of the world—assures advertisers that he has a bona fide circulation of "about" 25,000 copies. The ICONOCLAST has repeatedly offered to donate $10 to Texas' chief Baptist University for every thousand paid circulation the *Standard* can prove in excess of 10,000. That offer still stands. Its publisher dares not come to a showdown, because it would everlastingly wreck his advertising graft, and might result in his going to the penitentiary. Still, the *Standard* is a fair sample of seven-eights of the sectarian weeklies printed in the South. When a man has failed at everything else he dons a Prince Albert coat, a cholera-morbus expression, grinds out some kind of mental abortion stuffed with hypocritical "awmens" and proceeds to work the advertising sucker.

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There can no longer be any doubt that many of the great railway corporations are bringing more than legitimate pressure to bear upon their employes to bring them into the McKinley camp. Many letters have reached the ICONOCLAST from railway men who declare that they dare not openly espouse the cause of Bryan lest their names be quietly erased from the pay rolls. If the railway bosses could read these letters they would probably abate their "pernicious activity," for they would quickly learn that the only effect of their labors is to breed among their men a dangerous spirit, which they dissemble for their families' sake—that at the polls the "glad hand" is like to prove the panther's claws sheathed in a velvet glove. To the honor of the Santa Fe be it said that no com-

plaints from its employees have yet reached the ICONOCLAST. A passenger conductor on that road recently announced in the press that he should work and vote for Bryan. If a conductor on any other Southern road has printed such an assertion I have not seen it; yet I know from personal intercourse with representative railroad men, that a large majority of them have no intention of voting for McKinley. "Do not publish my name, or you will cause me to lose my job," is appended to every letter received from railroad men complaining of attempted coercion. One writes: "The bosses are making d—d hypocrites of us, but we can't let our families starve. Why should we not tell white lies to infernal thieves? We won't do a thing to those fellows on election day but smile and smile while sticking a knife through McKinley so far that you can hang a link on either end. They're leading us as sheep to the shambles—I don't think!"

Mr. Brann: I hand you a circular issued by a grocer at Franklin, N. J., showing that, in 1867, when gold was at a premium, groceries cost twice as much as they do to-day.

FARMER.

One good turn deserves another. I hand you a circular showing that in 1867, corn and cotton were worth four times what they are to-day. It cost something to live in 1867, but labor was fully employed at good wages, tramps were unknown, and the number of business failures was 2,386, against 12,724 in 1894.

. . .

I am going to establish a "Jackass Department" in the ICONOCLAST for the benefit of such fellows as the editor of the *Emporia* (Kas.) *Gazette*. In a lingering jeremiad he declares, practically, that the silver cranks

are killing Kansas, while all the surrounding states are prosperous, then adds: "Every Kansas industry except farming is paralyzed, and that crippled because its products have to cross the ocean before they can find a laboring man at work who can afford to buy them." If labor be unemployed or underpaid in Missouri, how comes it that those states are so "prosperous" as the *Gazette* pretends? Yet the Republicans have flooded the country with the drivel of Emporia's unhung idiot—made it a card in their "campaign of education." It is true that Kansas is increasing but slowly in wealth and population. Its women have taken to politics instead of propagation, while its men are too busy spouting Prohibition and attending to other people's business to acquire a competence.

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Mrs. J. H. Hargrave, secretary of the W. C. T. U., writing in the Greenville *Banner*, advises the good people of that burg to read the October number of the Iconoclast. Mrs. Hargrave has evidently read it until she knows it by heart, and what so deeply interests a lady of her erudition will doubtless soon find its way to every fireside, spreading the blessed gospel of Christian charity, truth and temperance. In this artificial, high-pressure age it too frequently happens that people who disagree in politics or religion, wilfully misjudge each other and substitute vituperation for argument, but I am pleased to note that, while dissenting from some of my views, Mrs. Hargrave is an intellectual, a progressive Christian, a noble, high-minded woman who does not arrogate to herself the prerogative of pronouncing judgment on the world, but insists that both sides be accorded a patient hearing. She evidently believes that truth should be tried in the crucible of controversy, instead of taking a cowardly refuge behind ancient dogma and stupid intolerance.

What a heaven this would be were all women like the noble-minded, kindly-hearted Mrs. Hargrave.

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The St. Louis *Mirror* complains bitterly that the opposition attacks Mark Hanna instead of Bill McKinley. Willie Reedy should not worry. We prefer to deal with substance instead of shadow, with the master rather than the man. For three centuries the world has laughed at Don Quixote's assault upon the paste-board puppets; we are after "Master Peter."

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Hon. Montgomery P. Roberts has been airing his more or less valuable opinion of candidate Bryan in the *Illustrated American*. He concludes that the Nebraskian is a humbug, incendiary, anarchist, etc., whose mind is muddled, but who manages to captivate ignorant audiences with empty sound and idle epigrams, then adds: "Lincoln talked to the same kind of audiences, but nobody ever accused him of not having a clear brain." Didn't, eh? Mr. Lincoln got even a fouler dose from the plutocratic press, hack-writers and Smart Alec politicians than has yet been accorded Mr. Bryan. Even the great papers of his own party belittled and belied him, just as Roberts is belittleing and belying the intellectual Titan of his time. The New York *Herald* sneered at Mr. Lincoln as "a third-rate lawyer and fourth-rate lecturer" who peddled "unmitigated trash, interlaced with clumsy jokes, and filled his empty pockets with dollars coined out of Republican fanaticism. "Hon. Montgomery P. Roberts should be sure he's loaded before again turning himself loose upon the land. He may be neither an "incendiary" nor an "anarchist"; but he's an ignorant ass.

FAVORITE FALSEHOODS.

Of the Texas Pencil Pushers.

(The following o'er true tales may have been told at the last meeting of the Texas Press Association for aught the ICONOCLAST knows to the contrary.)

LIEUT.-COL. RIENZ MILITIADES JOHNSON.

YES; I once decided to abandon journalism for the stage. Actors are born; journalists are made. With a little practice, anybody can report a swell feed, an accident or a horse-race; but ah! to how few of us is it given to depict upon the mimic stage the various emotions of the human heart! Booth and Barrett are dead, leaving an histrionic hiatus which no common man may fill. Inclination and duty impelled me to go to the rescue of the stricken stage—to seize the fallen banner of Melpomene and plant it on more exalted heights than it had reached even in the palmy days of Garrick. I determined to enter upon my new career in an unostentatious way, instead of dazzling the world with a sudden outburst of genius, so accepted an offer to play Claude Melnotte to Cora Urquardt Potter's Pauline in an itinerant company; but soon became disgusted with the petty jealousies of the "profesh" and turned my back upon the tragic muse. In fact, I made a great mistake in not beginning at the top and letting such supes as Irving, Keene, Terry and Modjeska understand at once that I was master; but I had read in the ICONOCLAST that "genius is ever modest"—and I'm usually guided by suggestions. The first dress-rehearsal was the rock upon which all my histrionic hopes were wrecked. I had been out in the woods laboring with my "assignment" all day, and felt sure that I was going

to take the one-night stands by storm. When I'd say "Pauline," 'way down below my fourth vest-button and put in all the semi-demi-quavers, it would shake the ground so that pecans tumbled off the trees, plate-glass windows cracked over in the Fifth Ward and the concussion killed the fish for a mile up and down Buffalo Bayou. I got so I could put up a pose that made the cypress man on Main street asked to be sawed up into shingles. I use that pose yet, sometimes, when attending a Democratic convention or officiating as staff-officer to his Excellency. I can't do it so well on horseback, however, as I require both hands to hold on with. Well, I came on that night r.u.e. to sneaking music, and got a round of applaus? from the employes of the *Post*, who had come out to see me make my *daybew;* but I could see at once that Mrs. Potter was jealous of me. There's room in the caste for two stars, but a woman doesn't like to be outshone. Instead of giving me the cue she favored me with a stony stare, and said in a hoarse stage whisper: "In the name of Kyrle Bellew, what have we here?" Then she pranced up to me, looked me over and had a convulsion. I am a realist, and had dressed the character to the life; but she wouldn't have it. I wore the red waistcoat so popular with the French peasantry at the date of the play, and it being summer, came on barefoot, as a matter of course. She objected to my Trilbys. When a boy I ran barefoot over the red hills of Georgia until the wire-grass split my toes clear back to my heels, and had the impudence to say that when I came on with that red vest and those feet the gallery gods would mistake me for Cock Robin and call her Jenny Wren, and thereby turn the play into a farce. I yielded the point and the rehearsal proceeded; but she made another kick. She is very tall and then, while my attitude is about the same when I'm

lying down as when I'm standing up—especially after I've been over my free-lunch route. The Lady of Lyons declared that she'd have to make an obtuse triangle of herself to embrace me, and that she didn't propose to make love and do the contortion act at the same time without a raise in salary—declared she wouldn't weep into my red hollyhock boutonniere suit unless I'd stand on something, and suggested that I wear stilts. The manager interfered at this point, however, and suggested that the critics would say my acting was stilted. He set a soap-box on end r.c. for me to stand on, telling the *trazhayden* that he'd have it painted to resemble a stage-rock. I mounted the rickety thing and she made a rush for me like a Georgia razor-back sprinting for a five-rail fence. Awful impulsive actress is Potsie—especially in the hugging scenes. She can throw more *espree* and other French fixin's into a fold-me-to-your-heart-sweet-love scene than any actress I've supported since I officiated as referee in high-kicking contests at John Bell's beer and beauty joint. I saw that I'd never be able to withstand the shock; so I waved my arms and yelled "souy there!" just as Claude might have done when the marauding village shoat got into his father's garden. But she wouldn't souy. It wasn't in the lines, so of course she didn't take the cue. We weren't long in working up a climax, amid great applause from the supes, and the next day I sent her word that I'd cancel my engagement unless she'd consent to be sawed off at the knees.

MAJ. MOSE HARRIS.

I was running a weekly paper in—but no matter. I was younger then and life was fair before me. I boarded at the swell hotel of the town-drummers $2.50 per day, regular boarders $2 per week. Business was bad. The army worm, politics and drouth had so impoverished the farmers that they'd quit laying fresh eggs on the editorial table and sending in half a hog on subscription. It was an off-year in politics, and prospective candidates wouldn't put up a cent, while eastern advertisers only allowed 10 cents per square, to be paid in electric rupture belts, patent office notes and liver pills; but I kept whacking away, getting out a red-hot paper and putting my trust in Providence. Finally my wardrobe ran so low that I had but one shirt left. When it went to the laundry I became indisposed and kept my room. There was to be a shindig at the big cotton-press one night. I had the belle of the town stacked out for "the social event of the season," and she was a beaut. She was likewise the hotel-keeper's daughter and had boodle to burn. I had sent my linen to the laundry, and so had she. I kept my room as aforesaid, but she didn' have to. That afternoon about a dozen corn-fed damsels called to see her, and were in the parlor, which adjoined my luxurious apartments. Miss Doughnuts rapped on my door and invited me to join them in a little piano pounding and vocal calisthenics. I was making my excuses through the key-hole—pleading a bad cold, nervous headache, appendicitis, etc.—when the washerwoman's kid put in an appearance. He had a voice like a fog-horn, and when he lifted it over the transom laden with the information that "Ma sed as how she'd hung that ere shirt on a bush to dry, and the brindle calf chawed the flaps off it,

and it weren't fit to wear nohow," there was a snicker in the parlor that made my blood run cold. A black-eyed vixen struck up "The Song of the Shirt," and they all joined in. I managed to get hold of the kid without alarming the police, and told him to railroad the sad remains of that garment to my room in one time and two motions. At the eleventh hour the package came, and I proceeded to array myself for the festivities. But my troubles had only begun. There was a shirt, all right enough, but it wasn't mine. It was minus arms, and had a lot of scroll-work where the head-line ought to be. I decided that the calf had lunched off the front elevation instead of the rear declination, and got into it. I rigged up a pasteboard dickey, buttoned my coat high and while feeling that my form was not properly justified, was ready to go to press. In the hall I met Miss Doughnuts, who was looking very red in the face. She thrust a package at me and said the boy had made a mistake—had transposed the headlines, so to speak—and she wanted the exchange made in a hurry. I swore there had been no package delivered at my room, but the wash-lady's kid was on hand to give me the lie. I retired to my room skinned out of that long-primer make-up, resumed my mutilated brevier, stole a hand-car and faded from that community forever.

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D. D. BRYAN.

Curious things happen in a newspaper office sometimes. While I was city editor of the Galveston *News*, I had an experience that almost drove me to drink. One night, just as it was time to close the forms, I caught two items, which I scratched off hurriedly, the foreman growling

meanwhile and passing my stuff out in " takes " as fast as it came from my pencil. One item related to the marriage of a worthy young couple, the other to a nameless tough who had drifted in from Houston, tanked up, wrecked a saloon and tried to clean out the police force. The next day the paper contained something like the following: " At the residence of the bride's parents on Ave. H., Miss Cecilia Muggins was united in marriage last evening to John Henry Huggins, a Houston tough who blew in on a freight train and at once proceeded to get full of tangle-foot and make himself generally obnoxious. The police gathered him in and dragged him, kicking and cursing, to the residence of the bride-elect, where the Rev. Mr. Twogood performed the ceremony in the presence of about the toughest aggregation that ever got together in that notorious resort. An ugly scrimmage followed, in which beer glasses played an important part, the Houstonian beating one of the female habitues with a heavy chair until she was insensible. Quite a party of friends accompanied the bridal party to the depot to witness their departure for New York, when the police swooped down on the disreputable gang and loaded the worst offenders into the patrol wagon and, after considerable difficulty, succeeded in landing them behind the bars. Mr. and Mrs. Huggins begin their matrimonial voyage under flattering auspices, and it is the universal wish of the community that they will land in the penitentiary, where such characters properly belong." What did I do about it? Nothing. It was one of Doc. Young's practical jokes. He had the dogon' thing set up, printed it on a slip and pasted it on the paper that was laid on my desk. I tumbled to the fake in time to keep from jumping down the elevator shaft.

J. L. WATSON.

YES, I'm a great lover of the bike. It has been the foundation of my fortune. The Houston *Post*, of which I am general manager, was having a pretty hard struggle, and I was casting about for some means of cutting expenses. The circulation was so large in Houston that it required two carrier boys to properly deliver it, and I thought if I could dispense with them, save $16 a month and add it to the voting contest-fund, the paper would eventually declare a dividend. I traded around and got a bicycle and delivered the papers myself before breakfast. Riding ten or twelve miles every morning with a bundle of 200 pages strapped to my back soon developed me into an expert, and I concluded to take a spin across the country to Austin. By running a page ad. for Ed. Kiam for six consecutive Sundays I obtained a beautiful blue-flannel biking suit. It was just like getting money from home. I borrowed an army blanket, a coffee-pot, and, laying in a stock of provisions and canteen of bayou water, sallied forth. The weather was awfully warm and the roads a sea of sand, so by noon I was pretty well played out. I reached a beautiful grove, through which ran a stream of water, and concluded to camp there until the sun went down. I took off my flannel suit, washed it in the brook and hanging it on a bush to dry, lay down on my blanket in a state of nature and fell asleep. Pretty soon I was awakened by the sound of female voices. I thought at first that the fairies or hamadryads, smitten by my manly beauty, were coming to steal me; but soon realized that a party of picnickers were heading for the grove. "Aha!" says I, "I'll just don my nobby biking suit and join in the rustic festivities. I'll obtain a good

dinner without it costing me a cent, and two-to-one I'll get some of them to take the *Post* a month on trial. I'll never let a snap like this get away." I made a dash for my suit, but it had shrunk so I couldn't get into it. I tugged till my eye-balls stood out like warts on a toad, but it was no go. Instead of hiding among the leaves as Ulysses did when similarly situated, I grabbed the blanket, wound it about me, mounted my bike and started down the road licketty-brindle. The rattling of the coffee-pot attracted the attention of the curs trotting under the picnic wagon, and they gave chase, snapping at my bare shins. The blanket flew off and while the curs were worrying it I strung 'em. There was I, beneath a July sun, thirty miles from home and naked as a Mexican pup, when around a bend in the road just ahead of me, came another party of picnickers. I couldn't ride back among the dogs, so I slipped off my machine, squeezed through the barb-wire fence and into the woods. The male members of the party gave chase, but I got into a nice blackberry patch and eluded them. I hid out until I saw a couple of farmers driving by on a load of hay, when I told them I was a Boston man who had come out for his health, and if they would scrape up a pair of overalls and a cotton shirt for me I'd send 'em Faneuil Hall when I got back home.

* * *

ASSIGNATS VS. INSANITY.

MR. BRANN: Your currency plan, as outlined in October ICONOCLAST, is well calculated to capture the theorists; but the experience of France with her assignats and mandats condemns it as a species of folly akin to the free-silver craze, which I see you support only as a stepping-

stone to a more dangerous monetary insanity. You are either crazy, or you are burlesqueing those who are.

C. G.

One of the greatest of economic writers has remarked that a kind of intellectual vertigo seems to seize upon all who talk of money—and have not I as much right as others to become insane on the subject? Unless I be very far gone indeed on the road to the madhouse, "the experience of France with her assignats and mandats" constitutes the strongest possible argument in favor of my proposed currency system. It proved—what has been pointed out by various authors of international repute, and who were supposedly sane—that a paper currency cannot depreciate in purchasing power unless issued in excess of the requirements of commerce. In 1790 the French government—which was at the time a financial wreck—issued paper currency, called assignats, to the amount of 400 million francs, grounded, not upon coin, but on landed property. They were joyfully accepted by the people and circulated at par with gold. The issue was followed by a general business revival; but the government made the mistake of supposing that if 400 millions of paper money was a good thing, 45 billions were a better. By the year 1796 it had issued the latter amount, and, like the latter-day currency of the Southern Confederacy, it required a wheelbarrowload of it to buy a pair o' boots. I have no reliable statistics at hand concerning the volume of the commerce of France in those stormy times; but we may safely assume that it was scarce one-fifth of that of the United States to-day; hence the 45 billion francs bore about the same relation to French trade a century ago as that many dollars would to ours at the present day. We have a governmental currency of about 2 billions. Suppose we make it 45 billions—all

gold or based thereon: Does the veriest tyro in economics suppose the dollar would have the same purchasing power it possesses to-day—that corn would sell for 30 cents a bushel and cotton at 7 cents a pound? Certainly not. The nominal price of everything would rise by leaps and bounds, each increase marking the depreciation of the dollar. It makes no difference of what money is made; when there is too little money its purchasing power will appreciate; when there is too much it will depreciate in spite of the devil. Money, like all things else for which man has use, is amenable to the law of supply and demand, and the sole object of my plan is to keep the supply of money relative to the demand forever the same, thereby preserving, through all vicissitudes of fortune, an immutable measure of value. Had the French National Assembly or the congress of the Southern Confederacy adopted an automatic system, such as I suggested in the October ICONOCLAST, whereby commerce becomes the sole judge of its monetary needs, instead of forcing tons of useless paper into the channels of trade, disastrous inflation could not possibly have occurred. Nothing short of the collapse of a government can affect the credit of its paper currency so long as it is not and *cannot* be issued in excess of the actual monetary needs of the nation. That is a proposition conceded by standard economists—by the very men to whom goldbug orators and editors turn for inspiration. Comparing the demand for silver coinage with the free and unlimited issue of assignats and mandats by a job-lot of half-baked politicians, indicates that my correspondent has a loose wheel, hot-box or something of the sort in his own cerebellum. A silver coin can, at the worst, sink only to its commodity value. There it must stop; but an unlimited paper currency may go to zero. During the past 400 years the entire world

has not produced silver to the value of 10 billion dollars. Were it all in existence to-day, coined into the "dollars of our daddies" and circulating in this country, we would not have one-fourth of the relative value of nominal money that was afloat in France in 1796. If we should open our mints to silver and coin all we produce and could import, gold would not be driven out of circulation under a dozen years—if then—if the gold-bug croakers and other professional damphools would quit trying to throw Jonah and Jeremiah out of a job.

* * *

PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH.

Chicago, Ill., Oct. 13, 1896.

Editor Brann's Iconoclast:

SOME months ago—in May, I believe—you published the following in your Salmagundi column: "A lady writes me that Joseph and St. Anthony are her ideals. What's the matter with Philip the Eunuch?" Well, I know Joseph and St. Anthony by reputation, but I had never heard of Philip. I have inquired about him of various friends, but no one seems to know of him. Won't you give me, in the ICONOCLAST, a brief biography of him? You can write all that I want to know in a small space. You know how to be concise. Do not imagine, that I have any wish to elect Philip as my ideal. He wouldn't be my style at all. The editor of the ICONOCLAST, as far as I can judge without personal acquaintance, is more in my line. I enclose my photograph, from which, if you can read faces and the camera speaks truly, you may arrive at some conclusion as to my tastes, and if you wish, you may tell me—also in the ICONOCLAST—what that conclusion is. You need not flatter—but, of course, you won't.

Great as your gallantry seems to be, it does not exceed your candor.

ADELE DE LORME.

A typographical error in the ICONOCLAST has misled Miss De Lorme. It should have read: "What's the matter with Philip's Eunuch?" Of course, I knew what was the matter with him—the question was merely intended to call my correspondent's attention to a reliably consistent Christian, she having expressed great admiration for Joseph and St. Anthony. The biography asked for must indeed be brief. In the first place, the subject of my discourse is dead; hence I fear not his rivalry in the fair Adele's affections. I can only wonder, all things considered, he didn't leave earlier for heaven, where there's neither marrying nor giving in marriage, and he could feel at home. The Bible says he was an Ethiopian, but it does not necessarily follow that his hair was kinky, or that he could be safely counted in the McKinley column. From such data as I can come at, I incline to the opinion that he was an Israelite. At the time he was flagged by Philip he was returning home from Jerusalem, whither he had gone to worship, and beguiling the tedium of the journey by reading "Esaias the prophet," the ICONOCLAST at that time not being obtainable in Palestine. There was practically no intercourse between the people of Israel and those of Ethiopia, hence we may reasonably conclude from the man's religion and physical misfortune, that he had been captured in war and sold as a slave. At the time of his conversion from Judaism to Christianity, he was the treasurer of Queen Candace, and "a man with great authority." His position in the governmental economy of Ethiopia suggests the story of Joseph in Egypt. Remembering the prosperity of Pharaoh while

a descendant of frugal Jacob managed his finances,—cornering all the bread-stuffs and getting a governmental lien on the land—it were not surprising that Candace should select a Hebrew slave to superintend the revenues of the royal household. She may have decided to take every possible precaution against such scandal as befell the home of Potiphar. Or it may have occurred to her that, as Pharaoh's scheme of killing all the male children by throwing them into the Nile, did not prevent seventy of God's chosen people increasing to more than three millions in thirteen generations, and getting up a very considerable industrial revolution all by themselves, she had best nip the evil in the bud. I am pleased to learn that, while my correspondent is inclined to deny that

> "Mortal man
> Findeth naught dearer in the three wide worlds
> Than are the yielded loving fragrant breasts
> Of beauty and the rosy breast blossoms,
> Love's rubies; and toucheth naught more high
> Than is the dulcet harmony of form
> Seen in the lines and charms of loveliness,"

she is a little inclined—so to speak—to waste her sweetness on the desert air. While not much versed in the treacherous science of anthroposcopy, I suspect, after a careful perusal of her photo, that she could dearly love a man who "abounds in pleasant faults." I opine that were she wedded to the "pink of perfection" she would soon weary of it, and long that her lord and master might do something he would have to ask her forgiveness for. With my usual candor, I hazard the opinion that a healthy compromise between Siddartha, "sitting serene, with perfect virtue walled," and

"Kama the king of passion, who hath sway
Over the gods themselves, lord of all loves,
Ruler of pleasure's realms."

would fill her maiden heart to overflowing. I know not how much men are regarded in Chicago, but they're immensely popular here in Texas. But, of course, people are much affected by climate. Those who inhale the sharp winds blown across Lake Michigan's icy breast may affect a sterner morality than we who sleep beneath the magnolia's sensious bloom and only 'wake to hear the mockbird filling the perfumed air with melody which seems to say,

"Who hath grieved when soft arms shut him safe,
And all life melted into a happy sigh,
And all the world was given in one warm kiss?

Tennyson tells us that "Bright and fierce and fickle is the South, while dark and true and tender is the North," but Tennyson was reared on English fog and icicles and is not a competent witness. Mark Antony is the patron saint of Waco, the tutelary god of Texas. And who knows but he may have been at heart as pious as those who 'scape the devil's hook when baited with a tress of woman's hair? St. Anthony never saw Cleopatra or my correspondent. Of course, I may be mistaken concerning the tastes of Chicago's ruling belle. With her gracious permission, I will enter her photo in the beauty contest mentioned elsewhere in this paper. Should she be adjudged the world's most beautiful woman, I will soon have the pleasure of seeing her face to face, when I can better determine her tastes, and learn from her own tempting lips whether I be indeed her beau ideal.

ROASTING THE SHEMALE RANTIPOLERS.

Carrie Stevens-Walter is a bright little woman, who is creating consternation in the camp of the Shemale Suffrage shrieker. Carrie is a "roaster" for your gridiron. When she turns language loose it sizzles like redhot cannister raking a nigger regiment. She impales the woman-righters on her pen-point as a bugoligist might butterflies; is more feared by the crowing hens than a hungry goshawk, terrible to the "strong-minded" as an army with banners —or a bushel of mice. Carrie admits that the great she-world has—or has had—a kick coming; that man is primarily to blame for the existence of the Rev. Anna Shaws, Susan B. Anthonys and other stentor-lunged she-talking-machines who are yooping with their mouths open for the blessed privilege of wearing pants; but evidently considers that a woman looks better in the sacred seclusion of the home clad in a bewitching mother-Hubbard than diked out in a starched shirt and a pair of suspenders, howling on the hustings.

Writing in the San Francisco *Monitor*, Carrie concludes a castigation of "the imported whoopers-up of the California female suffrage campaign," as follows:

"A stock argument rung in as a clincher in favor of women in office, is the old, shop worn affair about Queen Victoria, 'the greatest ruler of the greatest nation on earth; a model queen, wife and mother,' etc., etc.

"Queen Victoria is simply a figure-head, nothing more; and, for all purposes of 'reigning' might just as well be a pillar of salt as a fat old woman busying herself with her gout and the colics of her great grand-children. Victoria has never been in any sense a ruler of the English nation. If the English people enjoy the empty figure-

head of a queen whose chief end and aim has been to propagate her species, and are willing to pay the price they are paying for the sham, and support the 'royal' litter entailed upon them beside, why they are quite welcome to to do so for all the objections I will raise. But in heaven's name let no American woman get up before an assemblage of American men and women, outside of the Feeble-Minded Home, and hold up Victoria of England as a model of anything worthy of emulation, anywhere on this continent. There isn't an American mother, be she washwoman or hard-working farm-woman, that has borne a family of healthy and intelligent sons and daughters, and raised them up to be virtuous and useful citizens of this great republic, who has not displayed greater ability as a 'ruler,' and done infinitely more good in the world than Queen Victoria with her sham title and unenviable brood. The idea of any female, whether she be woman or monkey, deserving any honor for mothering such a licentious, depraved and thoroughly disreputable old reprobate as the Prince of Wales, is too absurd—a man whose acquaintance is the death knell of any woman's reputation even in his own circle, and besides whom the lowest gambler, and the creature that lives on the earnings of depraved women, are gentlemen. Whenever I hear that old stock chestnut about 'model mother,' 'queen,' 'greatest,' etc., I think of some of the dreadful exposure of nameless wickedness in London upper-tendom—crimes so dreadful and so unnatural as to turn one cold and sick with horror—and how certain guilty ones fleeing from vengeance were not pursued lest in the general revelations that would follow their capture, members of the 'royal' family might be implicated. If I were the mother of such a brood as Victoria of England afflicted upon humanity, I would feel like covering my head with sack-cloth and calling upon

the mountains to fall upon me and cover me from daylight."

* * *

TEDDY'S DAGOS.

EDITOR ICONOCLAST:—I wish to call your attention to what I consider an outrage upon the people of this State, and particularly so at the present time. I refer to the multi-millionaire Green, who is now building a line of railroad from Greenville to Paris, and who has lately—not by any ability of his own, but solely by his mother's wealth—insinuated himself into the Republican party of this State, and comes forward breathing anathemas upon the Democratic party as the cause of all the woe and distress of the laboring element. Now this same Green has, by his contractors and agents, shipped into this State 150 Dagos from Chicago, and is getting the work done for less than a dollar a day. And still he goes round whooping up the Republican cause as the only salvation for the laboring element. He should be held up to public ridicule and their underhanded operations ventilated to those he tries to persuade to enlist in the Republican cause. DEMOCRAT.

* * *

I have just learned that the Baptists of Magnolia, Ark., recently whereased and resoluted against the ICONOCLAST. I knew there was something wrong in the economy of the universe, but couldn't imagine what it was. The choir will now sing:

"Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe."

THE AMERICAN PRESS.

ITS HYPOCRISY AND COWARDICE.

"Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying."

And yet the greatest liar desires to be thought truthful, just as the most cringing coward poses as the avatar of courage, the most abject slave of custom the beau-ideal of manly independence.

Truth, courage, independence—the three cardinal virtues of manhood, chief attributes of a godlike soul, triune, transcendent, synonymous, yet not the same.

Have you ever carefully considered the claim of the American press to these three great moral excellencies? Truthful? Is the American press truthful? Does it even attempt to be so? to separate fact from falsehood; to sustain the one and crush the other regardless of partisan creed or personal greed? Courageous? What has the American press done during the past decade to entitle it to flaunt these badges of honor in the face of the world? By what right does it assume the titles "public educator," "guardian of liberty," "tribune of the people"? What has it done to validate them? Can you think of a single instance wherein this self-styled "leader" has led in any movement calculated to benefit mankind?

Is it not true that the American press, instead of being a leader in the march of progress, is but a blatant camp follower? Is it not true that its most assiduous study is to get on, not the right side of a question, but on the popular side—the side that will put the most money in its purse? Is it not a fact that instead of molding public opinion, it is molded by it as clay is fashioned by the hand of the potter? Is it not a fact that it will follow the

crowd though it lead to the devil? Is it not a fact patent to all the world—a fact most pitiful, shameful, infamous —that its every utterance is predicated on policy, and that it will no more denounce the wrong or defend the right in any case or cause until assured of popular approval than the cur dog will attack a catamount unless hounded on by his master?

Truthful as a Cretan! Courageous as Falstaff! Independent as Uriah Heep!

Of course there are exceptions to this rule; there are to most rules. There is occasionally a paper that prints the honest views of an honest editor. There is occasionally a paper that scorns to wear the label of creed or party and accept as truth incontrovertible, wisdom infallible, the decisions of ecumenical councils and partisan conventions. There is occasionally a paper that does not wait until the popular verdict is signed, sealed and delivered before daring to express an opinion; that panders to the prejudice of no party clique, class or creed. To them be all honor! May their tribe increase! They are the noblest work of human hands—and the rarest.

Instead of being, as it proudly asserts, the advance courier of civilization, the American press is a brake on the wheels of progress, a straitjacket on society that prevents it from expanding, from attaining a symmetrical development. Its influence—such as it has—is used to aggravate all social deformities, to make them permanent. Its boasted conservatism is the curse of the age, the Old-Man-of-the-Sea about the neck of the social Sinbad. The American press is the sworn enemy of every man who would better his fellows; who would lift civilization to higher planes. It would have clamored for the torture of Galileo, the death of Socrates, the crucifixion of Christ. It is the press that stones the prophets of progress. It

is the weight that bears down the safety-valve of society, while the furnace fires rage ever hotter and hotter, the pressure in the boiler grows greater and greater, and the very earth quivers beneath the restless throbbing of the mighty machine, groaning with an agony of gathering power that sooner or later must tear it to shreds. Every advance in the march of civilization, every step in the procession of progress is accomplished, not with the aid, not under the loving guidance of the press, but despite its vigorous, offtimes vicious protests.

Let the wisest, purest man in the world, the most unselfish friend of humanity the century can boast, dare to call in question the dogmas of a political party, and forthwith the newspapers wearing its collar strike his trail, remorseless as Siberian blood-hound, persistent as red Indians, brutal as calumny! He has attacked "party principles" and deserves no mercy! He has dared to call in question the infallibility of the national convention—an *omnium-gatherum* made up chiefly of antiquated political hacks, tin-horn statesmen and patriots for plunder! Sacrilegious wretch! Nail him to the cross! Proclaim him an enemy of his country! besmirch his reputation! Call in question his sanity! Work, oh my brethren! bury him in a sea of filth, lest he lead the people from the true faith and we be left to follow the crowd on crutches!

The conservative press can learn nothing new from professors not graduates of its school. If they teach that water is wet the theorem must be carefully compared with the last party platform before it can be entertained for a moment.

But what of the non-conservative press? Shall we turn there for hope? Yea, in heaven's name, though disappointment make the heart sick. What has it to offer? Catholicons, panaceas, each warranted to cure all social and

industrial ills " while you wait." Coöperation will save the world if somebody will but hold the patient's nose and pour the medicine down its throat! Government ownership of land, or railways, or banks, is all that a valetudinarian society needs to transform it into a Hercules with a snake in each hand! Socialism, communism, prohibitionism, greenbackism, Henry Georgeism, *ad infinitum, ad nauseam.* God help us! May the great Demiurgus deal tenderly with the earnest crank and have pity on the damphool. But it is not *laissez faire;* it is not conservatism, so-called. Let us be grateful for that. Though it is stupidity, it is not the hopeless, helpless, house-dog kind that characterizes those papers than can only drink out of gourds inscribed with the party trademark. It recognizes that something must be done—something quite different from hooting the boots of Republicanism; something far otherwise than parroting the Ave Marias of " Jeffersonian Democracy," or there will ere long be his Satanic Majesty to pay and an embarrassing stringency in the money market; that the conservative nigger must be clubbed off the safety-valve or the pent-up forces will soon blow our boasted American civilization at the moon, and it offers such remedy as its narrow visual range can espy, such as its scant knowledge of social therapeutics can suggest. If it cannot allay the fever that is burning and blazing like hell-flames in the veins of the great social organism, it may, by constant irritation, bring it to an earlier and consequently less disastrous climax than would otherwise be the case.

. . .

On of the ludicrous features of the position of the American press is its abiding faith in its own puissance, despite the many object lessons it has received to the contrary. It honestly believes that as a world power it

outranks potentates and princes, is second only to Providence. It is firmly convinced that in politics at least it is a curative autocrat—that it maketh all things, and without it is nothing made that is made.

But what are the facts? There are probably not a dozen papers between the Arctic Ocean and the Austral Sea competent to elect or defeat a candidate for any office from President of the Republic to pound-master of a precinct. Certain it is that there is not within the broad confines of the State of Texas a single journal that can do as much to shape an election as can the proprietor of the most disreputable dive in the city where it is published.

This is no fancy sketch; it is true as the Synoptical Gospels. Many a ward heeler and saloon rounder is more potent in politics than any diurnal publication between the Sabine and the Rio Bravo. There is not a paper in the State with influence enough to close up a disreputable doggery or dance house whose existence is a plain violation of both the letter and spirit of the State law and municipal ordinances! And what is true of Texas is true, in greater or less degree, of every State of the Union.

Influence? The influence of the American press is of the negative kind. It can and does keep good men out of politics, out of works of reform, because such men are nearly always sensitive, and dread like death even a public criticism which they heartily despise. The people are not like sticks and stones, *sans* eyes, *sans* ears, *sans* sense. They are fully alive to the fact that the newspapers are not philosophical impartial tribunals, but organs of partisan prejudice, attorneys engaged to promote special interests. The people no longer accept the opinions furnished them cut and dried by the papers, because they know that they are not honest opinions. They no longer accept the dicta of the press, because they know full well that

editors have exchanged the ermine of the bench for the wig of the barrister.

And this is the Archimedean lever that moves the world! This is the "sentinel on the watch-tower of liberty," the dynamics of progress! This it is that presumes to criticize potentates and powers, principles and politics; that opposes to the death every innovation until it is accomplished, then, if it prove popular, calmly takes to itself the credit and hurls foul scorn at all dissenters! This it is before which brave men are mute and honest men, fearing unmerited dishonor, open not their mouths! This it is that men try to propitiate as they would an ignorant, brawling woman; whose anger they avoid as they would the blind fury of a mob; beneath whose criticism the sensitive soul writhes in torture such as Dante pictured of the damned. And yet the anger of the press amounts to nothing more than a thunderous report and the villainous smell of sulphur. Men have defied it and lived—lived beyond prison walls, loved and respected.

It may be that under existing social conditions it is impossible that the press should be better than it is. No publisher can be blamed for declining to steer his paper into inevitable bankruptcy. It may be that the press has but adapted itself to social conditions which it did not make and is powerless to alter.

But while that fact, if fact it be, may extenuate its frivolity, it does not excuse its offensive self-righteousness, its arrant hypocrisy, its attempt to shackle every man who would make social conditions better, politics purer. If it find it impossible to lead; if it find it necessary to servilely follow, to become a foul pander to partisan prejudice, a pleader of special causes instead of the umpire of national polity, it should drop its high pretensions.

The standard of intelligence, like the standard of profes-

sional ethics, is too low in journalism. While the American press is arrogating to itself superior wisdom; while it is presuming to give counsel to the world's wisest with the calm assurance of preternatural prescience, it is a mournful fact that American newspaper men are, as a class, below, and far below in intelligence, any other professional class, any commercial class in this country.

Look at a State convention of lawyers, doctors, bankers, commercial travelers, manufacturers—what you will; then look at a State press convention, and mark the contrast! The former is to the latter as Hyperion to a Satyr. Thoughtful, intelligent faces predominate in the former; stupid, shallow, conceited physiognomies in the latter. "A fool newspaper man," has wellnigh passed into a proverb.

That the journalistic standard of intelligence is below instead of above the average of professional and commercial standards every close observer will bear willing witness. That such should be the case, every man capable of reasoning from cause to effect will say upon a moment's reflection. Money, in America, attracts brains as the magnet attracts the needle. The intelligence of the country is drawn to the gain-getting avocations and journalism is not one of them. In fact, the poverty of the press is as proverbial as its pusillanimity, of which it is both the mediate and immediate cause. The higher intelligence of the American people is not devoting its energies to scandalmongering, chronicling prize fights and expatiating on the beauties of ball dresses. The bright young men of this land are not falling over each other in their mad haste to capture the editorial "we" and give unsought advice on matters of which they know nothing. They are turning their attention to merchandising, banking, speculation, transportation, to law and medicine, to avocations that pay, leaving journalism to those who make up in

"gall" what they lack in "gumption." Gambling, baseball, the pulpit and the stage divide with the sanctum those aspiring intellects that mount above the plow but cannot reach the countingroom.

Will Carleton's old farmer, who thought his young hopeful would make a capital editor because he was fit for nothing else, was evidently a close observer. The fact that Jim was "built of second-growth timber"; that his judgment was small and his appetite abnormal, especially qualified him to shine at a State press convention. He would doubtless have been elected President of the association on the first ballot. Of course there are exceptions to this general rule. American journalism can boast its Greeleys as the stage can its Barretts, the pulpit its Beechers; but the number of really brainy men in editorial harness, as compared with those in other occupations, is ludicrously small.

Such American journalism is, but such it should not be. Journalism should be to all other avocations what philosophy is to science. It should be the crucible in which all things are tried by Promethean fire; the laboratory in which principles and politics, measures and moralities are analyzed with painstaking patience, with absolute fairness, and stamped with their true worth.

Journalism and practical philosophy should be synonyms. The editor should be the high priest of civilization; the sanctum should be the sanctuary of justice, the temple of holy aspirations, the alma mater of noble thoughts. Will it ever be so? It may be. That journalism appears to be sinking down to more fearful depths, does not extinguish hope. Even the church lapsed from virtue, and instead of the avatar of love and law became the personification of hate and discord. It touched the deepest depth, and then the divine spark in man rebelled against the

degradation, and brave souls led it back toward the sun-kissed heights.

Let us hope that American journalism has reached its nadir, and that henceforth its tendency will be steadily upward. There are portents that proclaim it cannot much lower go. Public opinion is already turning upon it angry, scornful glances. Already may be observed an occasional effort to mount; already the truth is sometimes blurted out with a sullen defiance of party platforms and policy, with a contempt of partisan prejudice, here and there an editor whose pen is not guided by the hand of a peon—whose proud spirit is turning fiercely at bay. Here and there is being planted a standard a little way up the mountain-side, and from its shadow rings sharp and shrill, above the buzz of barristers and the stale platitudes of partisan polemics, a clarion call inciting the servile press to exchange the shackles for the sword—to stand erect in its might and majesty, and lead where honest men dare follow.

* * *

OBSCENE CONVERSATION.

I CAN understand the man who frequents houses of ill-fame; I can apologize for a man like Lincoln who tells a fragrant story to illustrate a thesis or enforce an argument; but I cannot comprehend the degradation of that mind which, like a scurvy fice, finds pleasure in wallowing in the filth of obscene conversation. Animalism may drive a weak man into excesses which his conscience condemns; but that the mind itself should find pleasure in feeding on corruption, evidences a mental obliquity and moral perversity that staggers belief. To their eternal shame be it said, American men are the most foul-mouthed animals on earth. The obscene exclamation is fast supplanting

the "good round Anglo-Saxon oath." The retailing of vulgar stories constitutes the feature of their social conversation, doggerel verses too foul for print in the most disreputable journals attain a vast sub-rosa circulation, and pictures so vile as to be monstrous find a ready sale in so-called respectable circles. Taste for this class of art and literature must be acquired like that for tobacco and opium, for, whatever be the inclinations of the flesh, the mind naturally worships the pure. Our young men appear to think a vulgar mouth an evidence of manliness, as they once thought the ability to drink and smoke distinguished the dashing cavalier from the common herd. Like Gil Blas, they are eager to be thought gentlemen of intrigue, and so cultivate a taste which stamps them at once as proletarians—dangerous only to grisettes and Bowery girls. The accomplished roue would as soon die with a bullet in his back as an obscene publication in his pocket. The most daring Don Juan I ever knew would not listen to an anecdote that was not chaste as ice. His cheeks would flame like a school girl's at a vulgar word. The imprint of Hell was upon his heart; but it was the Gehenna of fire, not the Valley of Hinnom. Nor is it the young men alone who are given over to grossness; the graybeards are equally guilty. Coming up from Galveston a few nights ago, a party of four professional men—than whom few stand higher in the South—occupied the smoking-room of the Pullman. Two were old, two young. They discussed politics as a matter of course—and business. Then they talked of their families. The young men were newly married, the old had grown daughters—four happy homes. From this sacred subject they drifted to obscene "yarns," and for two hours Youth and Age vied with each other in the province of vulgarity. I felt as though these educated and unquestionably able men had

been transformed into Gulliver's Yahoos before my eyes. A railroad cigar makes a good disinfectant, and I concluded to stand it. A preacher must not altogether avoid the slums, but study life in all its phases. I looked at these men and wondered why Almighty God allowed lips so foul to touch those of pure women. In the smoke of my cigar I saw a vision. Standing beside the young men were their brides with faces ghastly pale, gazing horror-stricken upon their shattered idols. Near the old men were two imperial dames with silver threaded hair, vainly striving to shut from the ears of shame-faced maids the coarse obscenities of their sires. The quartette suddenly observed their visitors, and, springing to their feet, stood with bowed heads and burning brows. Timidly they put out hands to their loved ones mumbling unintelligible apologies; but the latter drew back in alarm, stood for a moment with heaving bosoms and wildly dilating eyes, then turned with a shriek and fled into the darkness. Perhaps the phenomenal success of publications given o'er to sensationalism and scandal-mongering is an encouraging sign—an evidence that Vice is coming down out of the realm of sentiment, of poesy and song, where it endangers the very elect, singes the wings of angels; that in time it will become so grossly materialistic as to be attractive only to stable boys and scullions. When Launcelot lays aside the lute for the coarse compliment, forgoes the bewildering anacreontic and puts a "personal" in the paper requesting Guinivere to meet him in the park, we may well hope that the pure in heart are safe. Only buzzards are trapped with carrion.

CHURCH AND STAGE.

THE phenomenal success of Wilson Barrett's religio-libidinous drama, "The Sign of the Cross," seems destined to have a far-reaching effect. It may even result in a complete transposition of the church and stage, assigning to the first the amusement of the worldly, consecrating the latter to divine worship. Since this now famous play inoculated London with the camp-meeting jerks, quite a number of Biblical dramas have been announced; and, as might have been expected, they revolve around the most disreputable female characters to be found in Holy Writ. Blasphemy masquerading as religion is made the excuse for suggestions of bawdry that might put even the *fin de siecle* French school to shame. Sarah Bernhardt is to appear in the title-rôle of "Mary Magdalene," while Mrs. Potter, the soiled society dove who is "elevating the stage" with her sexual neurasthenia, has purchased "Joseph of Canaan," and will play Potiphar's wife to the immaculate he-virgin of Kyrle Bellew! One would expect this announcement to put addled eggs, last year's cabbages and has-beens cats at a premium—that these mimetic back-number bawds, who have dragged upon the stage all the putrescence of dramatic degenerates and now propose to make the Bible a stalking horse for even more flagrant harlotry, would be driven from the boards in disgust; but if present indications count for anything, they will be welcomed by the ultra religious element with open arms. Thus far all the protests against this prostitution of the Book of Books to advertise the inherent animalism of the faded beauties of the footlights and fill the boxoffice with boodle—this sugar-coating with pseudo-sanctification of illicit œstruation—have come from so-called sinners.

If the remarkable craze of church communicants over "The Sign of the Cross" be an earnest of the manner in which "Mary Magdalen" and "Joseph of Canaan" will be received, then indeed is the stage to be revolutionized—if not "reformed"! We have a large contingent of semi-conscious hypocrites who damn the stage with all the virulence of a jealous man denouncing another's amours, yet who want but the shadow of an excuse to become conspicuous at the play. The Biblical drama, so-called, affords them a pretext—enables them to urge that the theatre has, for the nonce, become a kind of post-graduate Sunday-school, which it is their sacred duty as professing Christians to attend; and thus far they have fairly fallen over each other in availing themselves of the coveted opportunity to reveal in moral rottenness exploited in the name of religion! These are the people who call Voltaire a vulgarian, while wallowing in Sam Jones' open-sewer sermons and Parkhurst's tenderloin escapades. Their stomachs will stand anything if it but have a religious trademark blown in the bottle, while "vulgar" and "blasphemous" constitute their idea of argument and serve to conceal their ignorance.

Measles, la grippe, nor even lice in a nigger school propagate so fast as a "fad"; hence by the end of the century we may expect to see the churches deserted by their present habitues and the temples of Thespis solemnly dedicated to the worship of the Deity, with the Bellews, Rices, and Corbetts as high-priests, the Bernhardts, Potters and Russells in the rôle of the Vestal virgins! It need not surprise us if Miriam yet does the skirt-dance to the sound of timbrels in a free-and-easy, and the gibbous Lillian introduces the Song of Solomon in "An American Beauty." If anybody can sing the Canticles so that 'twill not only "catch the crowd," but wear down the rugged

edges of religion and fill its paths with green-room plaisance, that songstress is the multitudinously married and ebulliently beautiful queen of *opera-bouffé*. Having begun to explore the Bible for startling plots that will permit of all kinds of "specialties," where will the enterprising playwrights pause? Are we foredoomed to have "The Creation" in six acts, with Kyrle Bellow speaking the Cosmos into existence, making man of mud and evolving Mrs. Potter from a spare-rib of our Edenic ancestor? Will Ed. Rice favor us with a realistic presentation of "The Judgment Day"—with epilogue by Ingersoll? Just think what a howling "hit" the tank-show manager could make with "The Deluge"—the dead in *puris naturalibus*, *à la* Gustave Dore! "Adam and Eve" would afford living picture possibilities not yet dreamed of by the most progressive managers; "David and Bath-Sheba," with Fanny Davenport in the bathtub act, would doubtless do much to popularize Biblical research; while "Judah and Tamar" contains dramatic climaxes calculated to convince even an agnostic that religion is a good thing and induce him to push it along.

As the melodramatic style of worship spreads, the occupation of those conservative ministers who neglect to adapt themselves to the new conditions, but insist on preaching Christ and Him crucified, will pass; but the sensation monger, like the famous Vicar of Bray, will not be easily ousted. If they lose their old congregations, they can be depended upon to make frantic bids for new ones—may even occupy the field abandoned by the stage and do a song-and-dance in the pulpit, or organize their choirs into burlesque ballets and regale us with "Black Crook," "The Devil's Auction" and "An Adamless Eden." Bishop Newman as a melodramatic star and Kiralfy making the sun stand still for the edification of a Sunday-school, Thos.

Dixon as Iago and Jim Corbett swiping out the Philistines with his own jaw-bone, were not so great a transposition as many ill-informed people might suppose. The stage has long been weaving a small amount of religion into its performances as a sop to the moral Cerberus, while many church choirs and pulpiteers manifest a decided penchant for *opera-bouffé*. Dramatic companies "on their uppers" have yet considerable to learn from impecunious churches in the matter of raising of money, known in the parlance of the "profesh" as angling for angels. While the "shifty" manager of a party of barn-stormers struggles in vain to get his "props" out of a dollar-a-day hotel, the country preacher pulls a bankrupt church from the subsequent end of a fortyfoot hole without putting his hand in his purse. From the *Arkansas Methodist* I learn that during the present year American churches resorted to the following novel expedients to corral the long-green "for the Glory of God": "Black-faced minstrel performances by young ladies; kissing matches (*à la* Olga Nethersole, I presume); pretty feet exhibitions; pantomime of 'Cupid in the Kitchen'; trapeze performances and fencing by young ladies in very abbreviated costume." Our contemporary overlooked the old maids' auction at Lampasas, Tex., and the sale of feminine legs to the highest bidder so successfully conducted by the Epworth Leaguers at Suffern, N. Y. Clearly the church hasn't far to go to fill the hiatus threatened in the amusement world by the sanctification of the stage. Quite a number of fashionable choirs could, at a moment's notice, furnish women who have attained sufficient unsavory notoriety to make them available as Cleopatras and Camilles.

I have not been favored with an acting copy of "Mary Magdalen," but hope the "divine Sarah" has sufficient conception of the eternal fitness of things to place the

finale of the play previous to the poor woman's repentance. Sarah in the rôle of a devout penitent would bankrupt the imagination of an average audience. It is rumored, however, that the drama will be carried to its historical conclusion—that this Parisian *fille de joie* will actually anoint the feet of an imitation Jesus with the alabaster box of ointment, bathe them with stage tears and give them massage treatment with her own fair hands and boughten hair! I trust that this is a mistake; or if it be not, that she will reserve the sacrilegious scene for her own beloved Paree, instead of bringing it hither to wreck what little reverence yet remains in this, the home of Smart Alecism, the Gibraltar of Infidelity. Religion in this utilitarian land is at best a spider's web o'erhanging a black abyss, a flimsy gossamer beneath which yawns the noisome depths of Unbelief. The shock of seeing a woman notoriously immoral, even at an age when the heydey in the blood is tame and waits upon the judgment, slobbering over some half-baked guy personating the Man of Galilee, and in accents wild beseeching his forgiveness—for a box-office guarantee—might prove more disastrous than the melodious sophistry of a thousand Ingersolls.

I am curious to note the effect when "Joseph of Canaan" is first presented to an American audience—with Kyrle Bellow playing sweet innocence to Potsie's desiring Egyptian dame. The sensual appeal will be in perfect keeping with her character; but when Kyrle turns a deaf ear to the siren's song and tears his clothes in a frantic effort to escape the female rape-fiend, to thwart her "hellish design," will the audience be, as we preachers say, "particularly edified"? Will the scene have the same effect on the congregation as an old-time camp-meeting sermon? Will it cause the sisters to shout and the brethren to confess their sins? Will the finale of the play

be an appropriate time to hold an "experience meeting"? Will even a fat policeman astride the neck of each individual gallery god be able to hold 'em down?

My bump of reverence is not so large as to wear out the crown of my hat; still I would be pleased to see such cattle as Bernhardt and Potter let the Bible severely alone —at least refrain from making it an excuse for flaunting their own foulness in the public's face under the specious pretext of making religion popular. Christianity needs no aid from Magdalens who have not reformed and Dame Potiphars who have not been defied. There is a valid excuse for the appearance in Holy Writ of Joseph's temptation and "a woman of the city who was a sinner"; but none for dragging upon the stage the long forgotten and forgiven *laisons* of Mary Magdalen, or making a peep-show of Madam Potiphar's nymphomania. I have hitherto held that the story of Joseph's continence was a priestly fiction like those of Adonis and Siddartha, intended to portray that ideal purity toward which the passion-cursed sons of men should ever strive with such strength as they can, such success as they may; but it had not occurred to me that a bag of superannuated bones and penciled eyebrows, ghastly enameled shoulders and pendulous udders might be the prototype of Cleopatra. If the lady in the case resembled Potsie, the self-restraint of the young man was in nowise remarkable. We can only be certain that he was somewhat better than Kyrle Bellow. Under such distressing circumstances Joseph was justified in crying for his mommer, or even in demanding police protection. The only part of the story that staggers belief is that he stopped running before clear out of the country.

The phenomenal success of books and plays having a religious warp and a sensual woof goes far to confirm the theory advanced by some psychologists, that excessive re-

ligious excitement and abnormal sexualism are co-natural —that where we find the one we may reasonably expect the other. I am not more responsible for this fact, if fact it be, than for thorns upon the rosebush or disease bacilli on the lips of beauty. Nor do I cite it here to cast discredit upon any religious creed or cult, but rather to emphasize a theory I have oft advanced—that what frequently passes for religious fervor is but a disturbance of the mental equipoise, or derangement of the nervous system, produced by too "powerful" preaching—that partisan politics and religious "revivals" may cause the same complaint. "The Sign of the Cross," "Joseph of Canaan" and "Mary Magdalen" constitute the natural sequence of sensational sermons. The latter may be compared to a stimulant, of which the more one drinks, the more he desires. Sacrilegious dramas and novels "spiked" with religion to disguise a sea of erotic slush, follow the slumming sermon and whoopla evangelist as naturally as straight corn-juice takes the place of the milder alcoholic tipple. A depraved appetite, whether mental or physical, seeks ever a stronger excitant. Holy zeal, so-called, becomes so ardent that the devotees are content with lurid descriptions of a suffering Savior, but long to see him and feast their eyes upon his agony; hence the "Passion Play."

Worship of the Celestial Powers is human love directed to the unseen, and human love at best is but a refinement of brute passion; hence lust and religion spring from the same source as surely as the fragrant jasmine bud and noxious jimson bloom are products of the same soil. To deny this were to quarrel with the law of evolution; so complain not of me, but of the philomaths and philosophers. Human love in all its ramifications, from lowest to highest, lives in imagination. When the mind is rendered morbid

by religion, it is simply a degeneration of the master passion—love has a tendency to revert to first principles; and thus we not infrequently find united in the same person the religious fanatic and moral pervert. On this hypothesis only can we account for the tens of thousands of praying prostitutes—women who morn and night petition the Throne of Grace with no desire to be other than as they are. It may explain why so many women in the respectable walks of life are at once deeply religious and morally corrupt—will take grievous offense at a kindly criticism of their faith while keeping an assignation. It may account for the remarkable fact that a greater proportion of preachers than of any other professional class are in prison for sexual sins, as well as the equally surprising truth that the church regards the honest and upright heretic with more horror than it does the professed Christian who has tripped on the Seventh Commandment. Of course those afflicted with what we may call incurable religiosity will assume that this article is intended to cast discredit upon the "Cloth" and insult the Church of Christ. Far otherwise; it is simply a red light hung out to enable the church to see whither it is drifting upon the broad tide of a mind-wrecking, morality-perverting, nerve and soul destroying sensationalism. *Voila tout.*

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JINGOES VS. JABBERWOCKS.

As we heard a very great deal during the last decade about Jingoes and Jingoism, it might be well to consider what these terms really signify, together with the political status of those by whom they are so glibly employed. An approbrious epithet applied to a person by a social blackguard or political Judas Iscariot, might well be considered

a compliment. It is much safer to estimate a man by the character of his foes than by the clamor of his friends. "By Jingo," a milk-and-cider cuss word, is a corruption of "By St. Gingoulph," the latter proving too big a mouthful for ordinary everyday use. In the cant vernacular of the Mugwump's "mother country," a statesman who favored a foreign policy with whiskers on it was called a Jingo by the ultra-conservatives, the origin of the term being usually attributed to some doggerel verse written by a worthy predecessor of Poet-laureate Austin during the Turco-Russian unpleasantness. One couplet runs—or rather wobbles along—in this wise:

"We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too."

Our own blessed ultra-conservative—or Anglomaniacs—borrowed the term from their British cousins, together with the rest of their ideas, and now roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongues, because "it's so English 'y knaw." When you find a man talking about Jingoes and Jingoism, you're pretty apt to find a critter using the nawsty broad Henglish ha, smoking a black pipe on the street, and turning up his twousahs at the bottom, *à la* the antropoidal purchase of the Vanderbilts. A Jingo, according to the couplet which I have quoted, is simply a patriot who earnestly desires peace if it can be had with honor; but who doesn't propose that his country shall be transformed into a cuspidore and its flag into diapers by any prince, potentate or power in all the great Universe of God. He longs to recline beneath his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest him or make him afraid: and to assure that blessed tranquility, he feeds a few slugs to a double-breasted shotgun and invites marauders to keep

off the grass. He "don't want to fight"—prefers Persian pink to vallainous saltpeter, truffles to hard tack, the smiles of lovely women to grim-visaged war. He doesn't carry a cypress shingle on his shoulder nor trail the narrative of his Albert Edward on the shrinking earth; but, like Sancho Panza, he will not permit his face to be handled with impunity. The Jingo is a man who has escaped the denationalizing curse of foreign commerce, the damnation visited upon political pride by the almighty dollar. He still entertains the idea that this state is the best for the country, and his country the equal of any on earth. He never forgets that the national flag is his oriflamme—that it represents his father's blood and his mother's tears, the honor of his home and the glory of his manhood. It is the Iliad of his nation, the history of his family, and was written by the sword of Liberty in letters of flame. He regards an insult to the flag as a personal affront, and a stain on his country's escutcheon as a reflection upon his own character. National integrity represents not his honor alone, but the fame of his sire and the future of his son. In these degenerate days, when

> "The nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels,
> And the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that honor feels,"

it is not surprising that the patriot should occasionally lose patience, curse the meanness of spirit that shapes the national polity, and demand that the "snarling" over gross affronts be exchanged for the fierce protest of the six-pounder—that the jingle of servile gold be drowned in the crash of sovereign steel. James G. Blaine, a statesman of the first rank, self-poised as a star, accepted by the world as typical of all that is best in the American

people—a patriot who loved every acre of the sunny soil on which falls the shadow of Freedom's flag—was called "Jingoism incarnate." Blaine was neither dreamer nor demagogue. While practical as Cato, he was just as Aristides. He believed that nations, like individuals, should treat each other with manly candor and ever place honor above expediency. He recognized that the United States is the most powerful—as it is the wealthiest—nation in the world and saw no harm in felicitating the people who made it so upon that fact. He despised a bully, but insisted upon a foreign policy of sufficient vigor to make the national ensign respected on every sea. To preserve peace and foster commerce he would go so far as consistent with his country's dignity; but further he would not fare, though confronted by an embattled universe and the certainty that the nation he loved would be wiped from the map of the world.

"Every medal has its reverse"—there are two sides to every shield. The Jabberwock is the antithesis of the Jingo. He must be numerous, else the earnest patriotism and modest national pride of a man like Blaine would not become the subject of general remark. These two illegitimate words were unknown to Webster, the great lexicographer being gathered to his fathers before they obtained lodgment in our language. In his day the Jabberwocks (signifying morbidity of the brain complicated with St. Vitus' dance of the jaw-bone) were designated as Tories, Traitors or Monarchists; the Jingoes as Patriots, Sons of Liberty or Minute Men. We have changed our political nomenclature in conformity with the prevalent craze for the bizarre—made it more picturesque if not so expressive; but the Jingo is still a patriot, while we recognize in the Jabberwock a Tory *in esse* and a traitor *in posse*. The latter, disguised by whatsoever

name—as a Conservative, Mugwump or Anglomaniac—is a lineal descendant of those American Royalists who sneered at Washington, defamed Jefferson, lied about Hancock, denounced Adams, and lent aid and encouragement to the enemy while our forefathers were starving and freezing at Valley Forge. Their scabby progenitors constituted the Peace Party in 1812-14, when John Bull was insulting our national banner on the high seas and impressing our sailors; and again in 1848, when American patriots chastised Mexican insolence and annexed an empire. They belong to that breed of unclean buzzards that has befouled the eagle's nest, and puked on every gleaming star in Old Glory's field of blue. They have ever been the chief beneficiaries of the Republic and its most active enemies. When John Bull attempted to bluff Uncle Sam out of his boots in the Venezuelan embroglio, they declared that war must be avoided at any cost. It was the same cowardly yawp, the same doleful prophecy of certain defeat that greeted the Continental Congress, that rung in the ears of Madison and Polk, of Lincoln and Davis—the same old plea of aristocracy-worshipping Mugwumps and anæmic Anglomaniacs that somebody was going to lose a dollar if Uncle Sam declined to get down and run his nose in the dirt. The Jabberwock gathered himself numerously together and revived the Peace Party of crazy King George's most dutiful subjects, assured his blessed "mother country" of his profoundest regard, prated of the "eternal debt of gratitude" we owed her for having twice compelled us to kick her bustle through her belly-band, slandered his fellow-citizens, sniveled over the prospective collision like a bottle-fed kid with a blistered basement, and otherwise conducted himself as did his servile ancestors when old Bunker Hill was crowned with flame, American seamen fighting their guns below the

water-line for the honor of our flag and Jingo Jackson writing history with lead at New Orleans. Just now he is opposing whatsoever may directly or indirectly aid the Queen of the Antilles to free herself from the infamous tyranny of the Christian Turk. Why? Because the miserable parody of God's masterpiece is built that way. Because war, or the probability of an international collision unsettles speculative values, squeezes the wind and water out of stocks, and—like Pedro Garcia—he carries his soul in his money sacks. He has nothing in common with the spirit of liberty and cares never a copper for the rights of man or the slaughter of innocents at home or abroad; but regards as grossly criminal whatsoever interferes for a moment with his accumulation of cash. He is invariably some fellow who inherited wealth or is fattening on the fruits won by the toil of his fellowmen; else a pitiful dependent of such parasite who echoes, parrot-like, the words of his owner. Crafty as a fox and cold blooded as a fish, cowardly of heart and servile of soul, he takes refuge behind a Mokanna veil of sanctified "conservatism" and spews his spite upon every man who suggests that national honor is worth considering—that forbearance can cease to be a virtue so long as gilt with gold. He would not have the nation go to war, because "it is not prepared"; and it never prepared, because he prevents it building an efficient navy and providing munitions of war with which to equip an army. Having deliberately tied the hands of the Giant of the Occident, he advises him that, being helpless, he should meekly submit to insult. It by no means follows that all who clamor for war are patriots, that all who advise peace are knaves. I am simply contrasting those who, like the Conscript Fathers, are ever ready to sacrifice life and fortune for honor and freedom, and that all too numerous class whose god is the

dollar and whose bogey is death. Chauvinism is a grievous fault; but 'tis the fault of a sovereign, not the vice of a slave. The most vainglorious swash-buckler that ever shrieked for canned blood is preferable to the Peace Party tear-jug who, when cuffed at one end asks to be kicked at the other. Between the exaggerated Jingo and the ultra Jabberwock there is ever the same difference that exists between the lynx and the louse—one always wants to fight, it cares not what; the other ever wants to feed, it cares not where. Commerce is a matter of grave importance; but to get gain—to feed and lie dormant—is not the all-in-all of earthly existence. Those orators and editors who object to any action on the Cuban question by Congress lest it "unsettle trade" and possibly occasion the loss of a few ha'pence, are so deficient in national pride, so guiltless of private shame that should nigger babies be born in their families their only concern would be to learn where they could sell them. When a nation takes its hand from the sword hilt to put a penny in its purse the end of its glory is near. We laugh at Lycurgus for having made money of iron that luxury might not corrupt the people and debase the national pride; yet every grand empire and aspiring republic that has passed from earth was slain with a dagger of fine gold. So perished Greece and Rome—raised to the skies by the swords of Jingoes, cast down to hell by the itching palms of Mammon's helotes.

The very men who have most to say about Jingoism when sympathy is expressed for the Cuban insurgents; groan the loudest and longest over the misery of the Armenians. Day and night they call upon the Christian powers of Europe to annihilate the unspeakable Turk, while the still more unspeakable Spaniard is committing darker crimes at our very door. The Armenian outrages are perpetrated for the most part by roving bands of

mountain robbers, who bear much the same relation to the Sublime Porte that the murderous Apaches once did to the American president, while those in Cuba are the systematic work of the Spanish soldiery. Why does the Jabberwock weep for the woes of the Orient and regard with complacence those of the Occident? Simply because war between European nations would make to his profit, while one to which Columbia was a party might deplete his purse or imperil his person. Hence the facility with which he swallows impossible stories of Islam's cruelty, while protesting that the Cuban butcheries of non-combatants are the vain imaginings of press correspondents. He's the soul of philanthropy when it yields dollars without danger; but when the balance promises to be on the other side, he's "strictly business" and loudly preaches non-interference. I do not assume that all the horrors which make Cuba a hell are committed by Spanish hirelings; for when through impuissance of the governing power, a country is given up to unbridled anarchy, armed bands of thieves and thugs, owning no allegiance but to Lucifer, hold high carnival; but I do say that according to the testimony of Weyler himself it is high time for America to interfere in the name of humanity. Spain is privileged to crush the revolt of a colony if she can do so in accordance with civilization's recognized canons; but she is not privileged to set up a perennial slaughterhouse under the very nose of this nation, then insult us with her infernal insolence if we fail to police every mile of our seaboard to prevent our citizens doing for the struggling victim of her insatiate greed and supernal gall what La-Fayette, Baron de Kalp and hundreds of other brave souls did for Columbia when British bayonets were at her breast. The plea set up by the so conscientious "conservative" that we owe Spain a debt of gratitude that should cause

us to withhold our hand, is the sheerest guff. It is true that her monarchs, anxious to extend their empire and enhance their revenues, aided somewhat the Italian Columbus, who paved the way for the discovery of this continent; but what did the Spaniard ever do for the Western world except rob its copper-colored kings and mix syphilitic blood with that of the equally "haughty" and almost as indolent savages? Spain encouraged us in our rebellion against an easier task-master than she was ever known to be; not that she loved liberty more, but that she esteemed England less. For the loan of $70,000 and a few old flint-lockmuskets, she has our thanks, but not our coöperation in her cruelties. France was our active ally, both on land and sea; but we could not reward her services by leaving Mexico at her mercy. The very aid and encouragement Spain extended to a revolted colony of England precludes the plea that we are not privileged to assist struggling Cuba, but must stand idly by while she, like Galgacus' Romans, transforms a garden into a desert and calls it peace. To merely recognize the belligerency of the Cubans were as idle as to tender moral support to a man beset by savages. Senator Mills is the only public man with sufficient courage to defy the canting "Conservatives" and Pecksniffian Mugwumps and go to the root of the matter. We must either close our ears to Cuba's cry for assistance or we must go to her side with the naked sword. There are but two ways to deal with the Spanish Don. One is to ignore his barbarities, and the other is to break him in twain and feed the better half of him to the buzzards.

EDITORIAL ETCHINGS.

The bicylicus has this nation thoroughly inoculated—the disease has become pandemic. The landscape is literally alive with whirling wheels and churning legs—legs of all kinds, colors, classes and conditions, from the dude's scrawny pipe-stem to the three hundred-pound woman's unhewn mill-post. Even rheumatic octogenarians have mastered the elusive machine, and preachers go solemnly pedaling to Sunday morning services and Wednesday evening prayer. Every girl who possesses a pretty ankle, or can shove her bunions into a No. 4 shoe, has bought a bike and the whole he-world is scorching in her wake. A few old maids still hold aloof and say it's horrid; but they have a hungry look in their eyes which betokens a feverish desire to know how it feels to ride clothes-pin fashion. The morning papers give us fried bicyclus for breakfast, the evening journals serve us with a rehash of the same for supper—and on such intellectual fodder the nation is expected to rear philosophers! Is it a permanent case of paranoiac peregrinatus? Heaven forefend! The roller-skating craze was equally acute; but it waxed and waned and went where the woodbine twineth. Let us hope that its fellow lunacy will soon follow suit. I suspect that after serving its time as fashion's toy, the bike will become simply a convenience of working people. Men who cannot keep a horse will continue to bike, but woman will entirely abandon it. Why? Because she is "constant to one thing never"; because riding and walking synchronously is not half so exhilarating as a whirl on a spirited horse; because —and this is by far the most potent reason—the prettiest and most graceful woman alive is a holy terror, a veritable nightmare the moment she straddles a machine. Woman

affects biking now, not because it is particularly pleasant; but for the self-same reason that she wears balloon or skin-tight sleeves, hoop-skirts or pull-backs—it is Dame Fashion's decree. May that capricious despot soon bid the wheel depart—even though she places her devotees on horseback in a similar fashion. And why, pray, should not a society belle wear her horse as she does her bike? So mounted, her limbs would be in repose and she would not have to paw the atmosphere with her feet. All that is necessary to make it "quite the proper thing" is a ukase from the eminently moral city of Paris. Still I assume that a majority of we he-things, whether saint or sinner, prefer a method of female locomotion that will permit us, for a time at least, to forget that lovely woman has legs —to resume our adoration of the mysterious, which has ever constituted her chief charm. We long to see her once more upon her feet in graceful skirts that fall from waist to heel, and whose "flowing, flowing, flowing" suggests the melody of motion. The bicycle girl quite captivated us with her dash, her dainty cap, her shapely l—ahem!—ankle, and *sans-souci;* but we are becoming the least bit weary of her and fain would exchange her bonhomie for the grace and dignity of the woman whose laugh is not quite so loud, her *camaraderie* not so frank and her garters not so often in evidence. After all, the stately, high-bosomed heroines of Homer appear more attractive than the rainbow-shaped back, and bust driven far toward the equatorial line with much bending over the handle-bars. A fine horse-woman taking a hedge is a more inspiring sight than a bench-legged female scorching down a hill. Yes, we can part with the bicycle girl without regret. She is not half bad; but there are—or were—others. If she will but pedal around a bend in the road and change her duds, we will strive to forget that for a year past she has been

an amorphous blotch on the landscape instead of its most bewitching beauty.

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The bike is the fecund mother of "fads." New York's female bike fiends have begun to take their pet animals with them when they go out for a spin, and some of the so-called sterner sex are following the fashion. Mr. Carroll Fleming carries his pug in a basket suspended from the handle-bars. This is an exemplification of the old adage that nature makes no mistakes. The New York dude who can render life more pleasant for a pug dog has a valid excuse for existing. I have said some hard things about the chappies; but I now see plainly that I was flying in the face of Providence. God made the dude as body-servant for the pug dog—to bedeck it with collars and bells, take it out riding and fight its fleas. Mr. Chas. Hemstreet, another New York exquisite, enjoyed for a time the highly honorable position of French maid to a monkey; but the simian is dead—couldn't stand the association. Mr. H. used to take the monkey with him when he rode his machine; but, overwhelmed with the disgrace of being seen in public with a dude, Jocko lay down and died. The chappies should be content to serve the bourgeoise class of brutes instead of attaching themselves to the animal aristocracy. But I will not speak harshly of Mr. Hemstreet, who is doubtless already the victim of remorse. An unkind word at this crisis might cause him to cast himself on Jocko's grave and either swallow his cane or blow out his seldom brains with a pair of bellows.

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"Gen." J. N. Huston, the Smart Alec Hoosier sent hither by Hanna to instruct "Aunt Hetty's Teddy" in the peculiar tricks of partisan politics and corrupt the suffrage in the interest of candidate McKinley, has been

telling credulous New York reporters what he doesn't know about Texas. "Why do you know," blithely exclaimed this lineal descendant of Ananias, "we strung a big Republican banner across one of the main streets of Dallas and not a single shot was fired at it. Ten years ago the banner would have been shot down before it was fastened." Just where the doughty "General" absorbed that idea I cannot imagine, unless he fell in "wid de gang," who filled him full of the scalp-dances and six-shooter sociables reserved for the guileless tenderfoot. He reminds me of a Chinese inspector once sent out to El Paso from Boston, and who, falling into the hands of those veracious frontiersmen, Doc Yandell and Major Fuel, started back to the land of pie and beans with each particular hair erect "like quills upon the fretful porcupine." Texans still have a latent liking for the six-shooter's siren song, but have not amused themselves with blazing away at Republican banners since Appomattox. The Republicans have for long years past paraded and perorated, whereased and resoluted in every considerable Texas city, with no one to molest or make them afraid—barring the frequent razor fights between their own warring factions over the claims of some buck nigger who aspired to be boss. "General" Huston complains that the Texas Democrats practiced intimidation at the polls. Perhaps a few malodorous cornfield coons, made impudent by association with such men as Huston and his *valet de chambre*, Hedges, got kicked back across the color line by self-respecting Democrats; but that there was no systematic intimidation of the colored brethren of the Hoosier carpet-bagger is established by his own claim that the Republican vote increased 100 per cent. A man whose mission hither was to buy votes in accordance with the old Indiana blocks-of-five formula, is not in position to make a very lusty "speil." It is bad enough to drive

an impudent buck from the voting booth; but it is honor personified compared with giving nigger preachers wads of the long green and sending them among their chicken-thieving parishioners to cry—as they did in Waco—"De McKinley pot am now open! Git in you fellows, git in!" The man who intimidates a voter is usually a "tough"; but he who buys a ballot is a sneaking thief. "General" Huston should either try Hardee's Tactics on his megalophanous mouth or spike it with a bushel basket.

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The paragraph which appears on another page criticizing the *Gal-Dal* for indulging in what appeared to be a deliberate libel of the late Jefferson Davis, was in print before the *News* made its remarkable apology. As it takes fifteen days to do the press-work on one issue of the Iconoclast, it is a trifle difficult to keep close tab on our periphrastic contemporary. The *News* says that its Questions and Answers department, in which the objectionable statement appeared, "is syndicate matter *made up for a number of subscribing newspapers.*" In other words, it is a flagrant fraud. The Questions are not asked by patrons of the paper nor the Answers given by ye able editor, as the public has been led to suppose. Some old hack-writer sits down with an antiquated cyclopedia and finds the Answers before asking himself the Questions which "Veritas," "Pro Bono Publico," "Old Subscriber," *et id genus omne*" are made to father. And this threadbare fake, first introduced in Texas by the Houston *Post*, the *Gal-Dal* foists upon the public as evidence of the omniscience of its editor! Well suz! I think I would have stood pat and let the old Confeds gnaw a file rather than make so humiliating a confession. Will the double-ender take the public into its confidence and inform us what "syndicate furnished it with those idiotic monetary and nigger

equality editorials which make it the clown of the late campaign? Now that our contemporary has begun to confess its faults it should not call a halt until its conscience is perfectly clear.

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Professor Irwell, addressing the American Society at Buffalo recently, declared that the New Woman is usually barren—that when not so her offspring is apt to be either sickly or mentally defective. Just what the professor meant by the New Woman the dispatches fail to inform us; but if he referred to those who indulge in a reasonable amount of athletic exercise, I suspect that he was—to borrow a locution from upper-tendom—talking through his tile. To assume that exercise which makes a woman broad-shouldered, strong-backed, deep-chested and supple-limbed unfits her for maternity were a violation of the canons of common-sense. For generations we have been complaining that the American woman was puny and incapable of that fecundity which characterizes her more stalwart European sister. Comparatively few American matrons of what are called the upper and middle classes can boast of perfect health; the greater part are victims of some distressing malady peculiar to the sex, a disorder which early robs them of beauty's bloom and renders life scarce worth the living. This unhappy condition is doubtless due in part to sedentary habits and may, to some extent, be remedied by outdoor exercise; but there is another and far more potent cause to which I would, with as much delicacy as possible call the attention of the ever-active female reformer. I refer to the all too prevalent practice among American women of assuming the marital vows and then avoiding their responsibilities—if preventing by radical and self-destructive methods the fruits of marriage. Of course many well-meaning ignorami—people

with more sentiment in their hearts than well-ordered brains in their heads—will declare this a libel on American womanhood; but that it only lightly touches a most melancholy truth every physician of extensive practice must admit. Millions of American women are physical wrecks because they refuse obedience to the law of God, "Be fruitful and multiply,"—because while enjoying the dignity of the wife they insist on remaining carefree as the maid. The result is that the birth of a child is to them a crisis, oft determined by Death, while their less rebellious sisters resemble those daughters of Israel whose activity frustrated the decree of Pharaoh. Women who have thus shattered their health and imperiled their lives should take athletic exercise only by direction of their family physician. As for our girls, let them walk and run ride and row until perfect health and finely developed physiques render them independent of paints and pads then either avoid matrimony altogether or obey to the letter the law of life. If this little homily be generally heeded marriage will soon cease to be the pitiful failure it so often is at present; for wives will be healthful women their boudoirs no longer hospitals to be shunned by their husbands.

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Wilyum Gotterdammerung Sterrett seriously disapproves of Mr. Bryan's appearance upon the lecture platform, hence there is nothing for the Nebraskian to do but cancel all his dates. Wilyum is the greatest newspaperman "wot they is," and from his *ipse dixit* there is no appeal. He constitutes by his lone self the Fourth Estate. He goes out before breakfast each morning with the Archimedean lever grasped in his good right hand and turns the world around. Then he issues his orders for the day to the various potentates and powers. The sun dares neither rise nor set until Wilyum signifies his assent. Still I dis-

like to see him sneering at Mr. Bryan's poverty as an unforgiveable offense. Those who have reached the dizzy heights of fame and fortune and grasped the writhen bolts of Jove, should not roll down great wads of withering scorn upon their struggling fellows. It does not follow that because Bryan is poor and unknown he can never become as wealthy and influential as Wilyum. The latter sloshed around in Texas for long years, gnawing free-lunch fodder, before securing the all-powerful position of Washington liar for a provincial paper that is occasionally heard of almost a hundred miles from home. Wilyum is not "making an arse of himself," as a Dallas correspondent suggests—nature having attended to that little formality for him. It seems probable that the north Texas people will, in sheer self-defense, have to pension this flamboyant flapdoodleist—will have to hire him with something handsome to withdraw his disgusting twaddle from the public prints. If Wilyum were really wise he would never have to work. He could sell his gall bag to an ink factory for enough to support him in luxury all the rest of his life.

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Elsewhere in this issue Col. M. W. Connolly intimates that commerce is a prostitute beneath whose feet morality is trampled in the mire—to win whose favors men will sacrifice their immortal souls. The aptness of his observations is illustrated by the position of a majority of our "best citizens" on the Spanish-American imbroglio as compared with that assumed by them when there was a prospect of blood-letting with Great Britain. When the Bird o' Freedom was whetting his beak and the British lion displaying his fangs, the "best citizens" aforesaid were loudly clamoring for peace and declaring "war with the mother country an unspeakable crime." For months past we have been on the verge of a rupture with Spain, the real

"mother country"—the country to whom we are indebted for the discovery of America and the timely loan which enabled us to throw off the galling yoke of British tyranny; yet never a peep has been heard from these blessed apostles of peace! Why is this? Because our trade with Spain amounts to only 14 millions annually, while that of Great Britain is more than half a billion. John Bull may expectorate in Uncle Sam's face and rub it in with the American flag, but the voice of the plutocrat is still for peace. He whines about the brutality of bloodshed, preaches Christian patience and heralds himself as the friend of all humanity. But Spain? "Umph! Let 'em fight," says Dives; "I'm sure it's none of my funeral." Now, as in Tennyson's time, "the jingle of the guinea heals the hurt that honor feels." It appears to be as difficult for a rich man to be a patriot as it is for him to get into the Kingdom of God.

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WITHIN CONVENT WALLS.

AWFUL REVELATIONS BY A REFORMED PREACHER.

LIST! O list! I have unravelled "the hellish plots of the Roman heirarchy!" I have invaded the strongholds of the Jesuit priesthood and familiarized myself with their "infamous conspiracies!" I have explored great convents from cellar to garret and learned "the hideous secrets of those prison-houses!" The unfrocked priests and "escaped nuns" of the A.P.A. have not revealed one-half the "horrors." They have suffered us to see only as through a glass darkly—the curtain has never been really withdrawn. The world has no idea of what a Jesuit really is, suspects not what actually occurs within

convent walls. And to think that the ICONOCLAST, the official journal of the American Baptists, should have spoken kind words of the Catholics!

I had learned from my brother ministers that a Jesuit is a modern Machiavelli, holding a commission signed by the Pope and countersigned by Satan—a man who goes up and down the earth like Job's ancient enemy, stealing souls with his sophistry. He is supposed to possess a gutta-percha conscience and be a master of casuistry, to have the eyes of a ferret and the instincts of a fox. By some intellectual thaumaturgy a Jesuit is supposed to make black white and prove that water is not wet. According to the A.P.A. papers a convent is simply a harem for the Catholic priesthood. Behind its gloomy walls bacchic orgies and phallic revels are nightly held, the red wine flows like a river and in dark vaults murdered babes lie buried. Every little while there is a demand that these places be subjected to police inspection; but as our law makers are in the pay of the Pope nothing has yet been done to rescue the wretched inmates from the pitiless grasp of Rome!

Such are the ideas that have been exploited in many papers, proclaimed from various pulpits and actually believed by millions of professedly intelligent people. Having been vigorously condemned for suggesting that such opinions might possibly be erroneous, I determined to penetrate to the very marrow of the matter, even though it became necessary to imitate the example of Jean Valjean and scale convent walls at the hour of midnight, of that Don Juan and introduce myself among the imprisoned houris in disguise. Fortune favored me, and I found myself one day in the great Jesuit College of New Orleans, surrounded by the faculty. I was somewhat surprised to see no trace of hoofs or horns, no suggestion

of that subtile cunning which marks the conscienceless conspirator; but having read somewhere that there be men who borrow the livery of the Lord in which to serve the Devil, I withheld my verdict until I should know them better. I looked about for that sybaritic luxury in which the Romish priesthood is supposed to revel, but found only meagre furnishings. The only attempt at ornament consisted of a few faded pictures on the walls, and in the place of honor was that of—Washington! "Where there is much smoke there must be some fire," says the ancient adage; and almost from its foundation by Ignatius Loyola an infumate cloud, more or less opaque, has hung round the Society of Jesus. But of this more anon.

The next step was to pass the cenobitic portals. Thanks to the courtesy of Very Rev. Father Semple, president of the Jesuit College, who for an entire day, became my guide, this difficulty was easily overcome, and I was soon exploring the sanctuaries of the Brides of God. At the House of the Good Shepherd, I found women in plenty who are not privileged to come and go as they please. They were thrust behind these brick walls against their will; but while the Church of Rome is their jailer, she is so by order of the secular courts. New Orleans is the Paris of the western world, and into the House of Good Shepherd is poured its female refuse for purification. Abandoned children and wretched prostitutes are sent thither by the police, and wayward girls by their relatives —a steady stream of the fetid offscourings of a great city flows into what is at once a house of refuge, a training school and a prison, while from it issue women who take up life's burdens with pure souls and brave hearts. Who effect this wonderful change—dregs transformed into diamonds, the malodors of the gutter into airs of Araby? It is a miracle equal to making the blind to see, or call-

ing forth the dead from their festering cerements. Compared with this redemption of degraded womanhood all the accomplishments of kings, the triumphs of statesmen, the laurels of poets and the miracles of scientists sink into utter insignificance. Who are these wonder-workers? They are the ANGELS OF GOD!

When we Protestants accomplish aught of consequence we publish it from the pulpit and in the press; the Catholic Sisters do good by stealth, content if their deeds be heralded in heaven. Even at the risk of giving offense to those who follow the scriptural injunction to let not the right hand know what the left hand doeth, I must introduce my readers to a few of the women branded by the A.P.A. as dangerous to morality and the enemies of mankind. Rev. Mother Mary of St. Martin is in charge of the House of the Good Shepherd. Born to opulence and eminent social position, she renounced the pleasures and triumphs of the world to devote her life to the reclamation of degraded womanhood. If one of obscure birth, dowered with poverty and wanting beauty can scarce bring herself to accept so laborious and disagreeable a life, what must have been the sacrifice made by this regal woman! Did she look back regretfully upon what she had renounced when, in the first flush of glorious womanhood, she faced that shoreless sea of shame with whose dark waves she was thenceforth to contend? That is a secret between God and herself. Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart has immediate charge of the "penitents," or female vagabonds consigned to the House by the courts. Most of these women are penitents only by courtesy when they first fall into her hands; but she is both strong of arm and kind of heart, and they soon yield a loving obedience and pass by easy stages from beast to human, from vice to virtue. A jolly nun is Mother Mary, and

her laugh rang out like a peal of silver bells when the penitents, mistaking the "Apostle" for a priest, besought his blessing. Beginning with the lowest stratum—the newcomers, blear-eyed, wretched, defiant—and passing through the various stages upward to the light, where hundreds of rosy-cheeked, neatly clad young women rise from their labor and modestly salute the visitor, were like ascending a ladder whose lowest rung is in hell, its topmost in heaven.

"We have made a beginning," said Father Semple, "let us go to the Hotel Dieu."

This is one of the famous hospitals of the South, and is in charge of Sister Lucia, of the Sisters of Charity. The most remarkable thing about it is Sister Lucia herself, a handsome woman with great kindly eyes, who has cast her lot in one continuous scene of suffering, and is giving resolute battle to disease and death. Through the long corridors the Sisters were flitting from room to room like angels of mercy. "Don't go in there," said Sister Lucia quietly, "they are performing a surgical operation. Men are such cowards. You would probably faint and have to be carried out." An hour with this woman, so tender and yet so strong, were worth more than tomes of argument against the A.P.A.

The Convent of the Holy Family contains only colored nuns, and occupies the building formerly known as the Creole Ball-room, a place celebrated throughout the South for the wildness of its orgies and the duels resulting from its debaucheries. There white men congregated to carouse with colored women, quarreled about their dusky paramours and either settled the controversy then and there or repaired to the Oaks at daybreak and fought with rapiers. In places the old floors are still blackened with the stains of blood. The Sisters of the Holy Family are

especially devoted to works of charity and the education of children of color. They have schools and asylums in various portions of the state and are doing more for the elevation of the Ethiop race than are all the politicians this side of Perdition. In the presence of Mother Austin, the superioress, one forgets her color and remembers only that she is sheltering the aged, educating the young, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. There must be something divine in a religion that can transform such a plague-spot as the old ball-room into paradise.

One of the greatest eleemosynary institutions in the world is the Charity Hospital of New Orleans. It was founded by a Catholic in 1786, and last year cared for nearly 10,000 patients free of cost. It is supported by the state, the municipality and voluntary gifts of the people, its domestic economy, discipline and training school for nurses being under the direction of the Sisters of Charity. There, where it seems that the physical wretchedness of the pauper world concentrates, you find the devoted Sisters battling night and day with the grim Destroyer. It matters not to what part of the world you belong; if in need of medical or surgical treatment you will be received. Mangled men, syphilitic women, deformed infants, cancers, ulcers, the groans of maternity —a score of surgeons with arms bared to the elbow— ambulances coming, hearses going—the Sisters moving as serene through it all as though there was no such thing as the A.P.A. on earth! Sister Agnes, the governing power of this mighty household, kindly consented to be our guide. The children all knew and clung to her. Everywhere dull eyes brightened at her approach. She seemed to be followed by those blessed angels, Healing and Hope. No wonder the Catholic church stands like a Gibraltar! One such woman is sufficient answer to ten

thousand infidels. What could Ingersoll say to Sister Agnes? Imagine J. D. Shaw preaching atheism in the House of the Good Shepherd!

The Archbishop's palace was next on our list. "Here," thought I, we'll see something of that high life among the priesthood of which I've so long heard. An Archbishop holds the purse-strings, and it is natural that a man should be good to himself."

His reverence was not at home, but we inspected his house. The "palace" is an old pile dating back to French colonial days, and the few rooms occupied are very plainly furnished. It was originally an Ursuline Convent, the first established in the United States. Feeling the need of more commodious quarters for their Academy, the nuns abandoned it, and it became the residence of the Archbishop. Evangelist Abe Mulkey's residence at Corsicana, Texas, is far more elegant. If a Waco woman furnished her home like Archbishop Janssen's "palace" she would be cut by "good society." It was in the chapel of this old building that the nuns prayed all night upon their knees before a statue of Madonna that General Jackson might be victorious in the battle of New Orleans. It seems that the Catholic church had not then undertaken the subversion of the American government. Old Hickory put Packenham "in the hole," and then crowned with the laurels of victory, entered the Cathedral, where the Te Deum was sung. He visited the Ursuline Ladies and expressed his gratitude for the prayers and vows they had offered to heaven in behalf of the American army, and for the devotedness with which they had received and tended the sick and wounded. While president he revisited the Ursuline Convent. This is a little matter which Congressman Linton has evidently overlooked. When he has succeeded in expelling Pere Marquette's statue from

the national gallery he should offer a resolution that President Jackson's body be dug up and burned. Thos. Jefferson, who drew up the Declaration of Independence, and James Madison, the father of the Constitution, while occupying the presidency, wrote to these same nuns in the most complimentary manner, the former assuring them that their educational institution should have the patronage of the government, the latter endorsing the letter of his predecessor. It is very evident that Jefferson, Madison and Jackson were all "disguised Jesuits," out upon these papal hirelings! 'Rah for the A.P.Ape! Let we'uns, who don't know the first dadburned thing about our country's history, "rally 'round the little red school-house!"

It would require more space than the Iconoclast contains to so much as catalogue the influences for good which the Church of Rome is bringing to bear in a single American city. We glance into the beautiful chapel of the New Ursuline Convent and find the nuns praying before the same statue of the Virgin which their predecessors invoked on behalf of the American army. Upon her head, and that of the Divine Infant in her arms, blaze costly crowns, made of gold and jewels contributed by the Catholic ladies of Louisiana. They call this representation of the Madonna, Our Lady of Prompt Succor, and believe that she has wrought miracles. I suspect that the real ladies of prompt succor are the Catholic Sisters themselves, but will not argue that point at present. What struck me most forcibly was the contrast between the magnificence of the altars at which the New Orleans priests officiate and their own unostentatious apartments and austere lives. We peep into the Newboys' Home, where the Huckleberry Finns and Little Gavroches are fed, housed and taught, the Sisters striving desperately

to rescue these waifs of the street from the maelstrom of ignorance and infamy. A Protestant preacher recently declared that but for the almost superhuman efforts of the Catholic church to stem the tide of crime, New York would become a chaos. Without it what would New Orleans be to-day?

To return for a moment to the Jesuits, at whose heads so many thunderbolts have been hurled: They could doubtless become very dangerous if they so desired, for they are armed with weapons that must eventually subjugate the world—a quick intelligence and superior education. No intellectual infant can reach even the first vows of the order—the curriculum would kill him. It requires ten years to educate a Jesuit priest, while ten days is sufficient to transform an ignorant horse-jockey like Sam Jones into a successful Protestant preacher. I cannot understand what attraction the life of a nun has for a wicked woman or that of a Jesuit priest for a man depraved. It is pretty safe to judge a tree by its fruits; and when we find men living frugal and laborious lives, inspiring a thousand charities, filling the world with scholars and holding themselves ever ready for any sacrifice, and all this without proclaiming their good deeds from the housetops, we may assume that they are making a reasonably successful effort to follow in the footsteps of the Master.

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THE PASSING OF THE REPUBLIC.

Thank God! the election agony is ended, and the howl of the macronathic nation-savers has gone silent for a little season. The people have chosen, for good or for ill, and the jackassicus who rises up at this stage of the

game to fill the air with foreboding jeremaids should be hustled up to the nearest tree and comfortably hanged. The Republicans have promised us an era of "Progress and Prosperity," and we must raise no obstacles to the fulfillment of that pledge. Progress and Prosperity are what we want, and we care not under what party administration they come. The attempt to keep up the free-silver agitation is a mistake, for the people have declared emphatically against the white metal. They are entitled to a fair field for the exploitation of that monetary policy to which they have given their approval. Let us wait a little and see if "a hair of the dog" will really cure industrial delirium. If it does not, if the Republican policy fails to afford the promised relief, we can again call attention to our remedies, and with full assurance that they will be better received. We cannot be cock-sure that we possess all the wisdom of the world—it is possible for minorities to be mistaken, notwithstanding the rule that the few who think are usually right, while the many incapable of reasoning are wrong. What the country requires at present is a good long political rest. It would do it more good than all the currency reformations which the wisest of administrations could possibly bring to pass. We keep our mouths open so much, shouting for this or the other economic theorem, that the sun shines into and sours us, quite unfitting us for the duties of the day. Watch and wait—and occasionally work. No nation in the world was ever yet made great by wind. The politicians out of office are often more dangerous than those who are in. They make Uncle Sam really sick by solemnly declaring him at the point of dissolution. They breed distrust among business men and panics among the people by their accursed calamity-clack. By persistently discrediting them, they transform potential

blessings into actual disasters. Peace, in God's name! "When the cause is lost there's enough of words."

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After all, there's not so much in the result to complain of as many imagine. Had Mr. Bryan been elected he would doubtless have been handicapped by a jackass congress. Too much would have been expected of him and dissatisfaction ensued, for the people still cling to the idea that government makes the grass grow, that wages are regulated and prices fixed by the presidential policy. Here and there can be found a man who knows this all to be a mistake; but the many would have gnawed and put ashes on their heads had not the industrial millenium followed hard upon Mr. Bryan's election. The "campaign of education" should be continued; but it should proceed along purely economic lines until the people learn that there's something of far more importance to be considered than the elevation to office of this or the other coterie of pie-hungry patriots. Some poet, whose card I have inadvertently mislaid, and whose language I disremember, exclaims in effect,

> How few the ills the sons of men endure,
> Are those which kings can either cause or cure!

When we come squarely down to brass tacks, we've got no "currency question." As I have mentioned a few million times in the glad hitherto, commerce has acquired the happy faculty of making its own exchange media, and there can be no lack of an intermediary for the transference of sugar and soap, cotton and corn so long as confidence exists that such exchanges can be made mutually profitable. The 40 billions of commercial currency now doing our money-work is not based upon a few pecks of gold, as popularly supposed, but upon the wealth and

credit of a nation which pays taxes on 75 billions. The Sherman-Cleveland-McKinley gold reserve is simply a hoodoo which New York and London have utilized as often as they dare to elongate Uncle Sam's leg. The cornering of all the yellow metal on earth could have no more effect on production and exchange than the monopolization of all the bob-tailed Thomas-cats if the "crime" were concealed from the people instead of exploited as a bogey to frighten them into foolish hysterics that they might be the more readily robbed. The tariff will probably be pushed up a notch or two by the incoming administration; but the worst effect will be caused by the uncertainty prevailing in business circles while the measure is under consideration. It really matters little whether we are on a gold or silver basis, have high or low tariff, if the policy were but made a permanency, so that commerce and industry might finally adapt themselves thereto, instead of being continually alarmed by prospective changes, resulting not so much from economic necessity as the exigencies of partisan politics. The real, the fundamental trouble is to be found in the fact that our system of distribution has not kept pace with our increasing power of production. Unfortunately, that is an evil upon which governmental fiat can have little effect.

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The best service which government can render us is to protect us at a minimum cost in the enjoyment of our lives and liberties and leave economic questions severely alone. Congress can never work out our industrial salvation—that is a matter which we must attend to ourselves. The theory that the appreciation of gold and the imposition of a high tariff tax are chiefly responsible for the fact that the people of this country are being rapidly divided into plutocrats and paupers, makes a catchy cam-

paign cry, but will not stand critical examination. These may be factors in the unequal division of wealth, but neither is of primal importance. Comparatively few of the great fortunes of this country have been accumulated in manufacturing industries, while the appreciation of gold, granting, for argument's sake, that it is the real basis of our currency system, has not been sufficiently rapid to impoverish a people whose productive power is the wonder of the world. The great bulk of our indebtedness is discharged within six months after it is contracted, while the amount of obligations having a life-time of five years and upward is comparatively trifling. The great trouble is that we have not yet been able to adapt ourselves to new conditions. The introductions of costly labor-saving machinery has placed the producer, whether employer or employee, at the mercy of the capitalist, who appropriates the lion's share of the product, and free-trade itself would be powerless to prevent this despoilation. We cannot purchase European goods at any price unless we produce something to exchange therefor, and the moment we produce that something capital steps in and takes its toll. No currency system which the ingenuity of many could devise would alter this condition, for money is simply the representative of all other forms of wealth, and equally difficult to acquire. The capitalist will continue to be the capitalist, and the producer will remain in his power regardless of the currency. It will be urged that while wrecking the people's gods I give them nothing in return. If these gods be mere Molochs, devouring their substance, or *igniis fatuui* leading them further into the bogs, it were best that they be abolished, even though no substitute be offered. Next to knowing what road to take to reach a desired point is knowing what ones to avoid. The toiling millions will not land in the

middle of the Saturnian Age by any sudden saltation. To that fact we might as well make up our minds. Civilization has its inconveniences and progress its penalties. I do not assume to say how these latter may be set aside; but it were well for us to talk less and reflect more—to refuse to be stampeded by every economic Cagliostro eager for an office.

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The most alarming phase of the late election is the revelation that the presidency can be had by any man both able and willing to pay the price—that the veriest blockhead, if he command sufficient boodle, may become our chief magistrate. A nation is indeed in danger when it casts its highest honors upon the bargain counter or offers them at auction. The Republicans impudently boasted that they would buy the presidency, and they kept their promise. There had been corruption before in presidential contests, but nothing approaching that of the campaign just closed. This is no idle allegation by the opposition—the fact is conceded by the more honest and intelligent of the Republicans themselves. It is gross to sense as the midday sun. It is not remarkable that political adventurers, eager for the spoils of office, should tender bribes; but it is indeed suggestive when the suffrage of a very considerable portion of the American people can be purchased. It proclaims the end of representative government, the passing of the Republic. When a nation's conscience becomes dormant all hope of future greatness and glory lies dead. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and Judas betrayed his Savior for a few pieces of silver. If the expenses of the Republican campaign committee be any criterion, we have among us a million thoughtless Esau's and as many corrupt Iscariots. Thus handicapped with fools and knaves, where is hope? Can we look forward with any degree of confidence to the

solution by peaceful evolution of the great problems pressing upon us? Can we expect the gradual uplifting of labor, the equalization of wealth along the natural lines of ability, effort and economy? At Chicago the men who howled most lustily because troops were sent to bayonet them for demanding wages that would yield them bread, were boodleized and voted for a policy of federal interference. Those who slobbered over Altgeld for trying to save their worthless carcasses from the bullets of the bluecoats took "the stuff" and voted against him. The men whom Mark Hanna robbed of their Spring Valley homes, filling their places with imported Hungarians, cast their ballots for his presidential candidate—whose shibboleth is the protection of American labor from the competition of European paupers! The survivors of the Homestead slaughter voted in accordance with the instructions of Andrew Carnegie. To paraphrase an old French proverb, the Pinkertons are potent, but a $2 is omnipotent. I am not railing against those miserable wretches who thus shamefully sold their suffrages—a few dollars is a powerful *argumentum ad hominem* when backed by an empty belly; I simply cite the fact to show that we are drifting upon dangers dire. There is hope for a people, howsoever poor, so long as they retain their integrity; but when that is gone there comes hopeless tyranny, for a people who can be purchased are too venal to revolt. The Goddess of Liberty is no longer out patron saint—henceforth we cast our offerings upon the shrine of the Golden Calf. The ruling power has been transferred from the people to the plutocracy, and the American Republic becomes like those of France and Mexico, an oligarchy in masquerade. To the student of history this shameful death of Democracy is no surprise. The Republic was but an experiment, and it is going the way of all bright dreams of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity—it is simply

another beautiful bubble bursting upon the surface of Time's shoreless sea. There has been scarce a European statesman who believed that our experiment of self-government could be successful. They cited us to Greece and Rome, bade us con well the historic page and be advised; but we cast king and crown behind us and leant with childish confidence upon the wisdom and the worth of man. It was a beautiful theory, and we hugged the dear delusion to our hearts. We would be lords of our own lives. For a hundred years the dream ran on, and we had come to believe our bright Utopia a beacon-light uplifted by God's own hand to illumine the world. And now we awake to learn that the "refuge of the world's oppressed," wrought out in blood and tears, can be bought and sold by a paltry syndicate—that Old Glory's but the oriflamme of dishonor. Not until Rome had lived a thousand years did she become so corrupt. Not until Agamemnon had been dust and ashes for ages did Greece sink so deep in political degradation as has our boasted Republic in a single century.

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There is one encouraging feature about Major McKinley's election, however, and that it required so much boodle to defeat Mr. Bryan. It argues that while growing corrupt the people have also become discriminating; that if left to themselves they would choose wisely and well. Brains have seldom been at par in American politics. Webster and Clay aspired in vain to the presidency. Tilden was defeated by a hen-hussy and Blaine by a hangman; but it required a vast corruption fund, in conjunction with adverse political conditions, to prevent the people electing the brainy Nebraskan. Not even Major McKinley's most ardent supporters have dared challange the public sense of the ludicrous by claiming for him

more than a mediocre mind; while Mr. Bryan, by the brilliancy of his canvass, proved himself the intellectual Titan of his time. So great was the admiration which his talents evoked that not even the 20 millions expended by Mark Hanna in corrupting the suffrage would have sufficed for his defeat had not Cleveland's administration proven a pitiable failure, and the people insisted upon charging the mistakes of this fat dunderhead upon the Democracy. What the political future of Mr. Bryan may be it were idle to predict, but that he is dreaded by the Republicans may be gleaned from the fact that they continue their campaign of invective against him with unabated vigor. They seem to fear that the people will become ashamed of their recent decision and insist upon the withdrawal of the president-elect in favor of the man who appealed to their honor and understanding instead of their purses.

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A LECTURE TO YOUNG LADIES.

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

I seek your judgment on questions involving serious dissention among four young women. Is it proper for women to appear decollete at those evening functions which, by prevalent custom, require her to be so attired? Would you recommend to these young women the promiscuous reading of such authors as Balzac, Boccaccio, Flauber, "Jean Jaques," etc.? If you will prescribe the drapery required for those participating in the ICONOCLAST's beauty contest we may each agree to enter the ranks of the disputants.

San Antonio, Nov. 11.

M. M.

The Iconoclast has never posed as an authority on woman's apparel, being content to worship her, whether clad in Paradisaic apron *sans* bib, or Quaker costume enveloping her form divine from head to heel. Were I so fortunate as to be the only man on earth—a lone thorn 'mid half a billion blossoms—I should insist upon a renaissance of the Edenic fashion, when lovely woman was clothed only with a few fig leaves and freckles; but—alas!—"there are others"; and among them be men of impure minds who do not worship beauty for its own sweet sake, whether it be woman's shapely form, the slanting sunlight on a sleeping sea, or a rosebud diademed with the morning dew. Decollete? Well, there isn't a he-sinner on earth who doesn't heartily approve of it—on some other fellow's sister or fiancee. I can see no reason why a woman possessing well-rounded arms and shapely shoulders should not afford her friends and acquaintances a modest glimpse thereof; but a corsage cut sufficiently low to give more than the faintest hint of the bosom's splendor suggests a *sans-souci* unworthy of the highest type of womanhood. We are told that a maid is prodigal enough of her charms when she reveals them to the moon; what then can we say of a custom which compels her to expose half her ivory hemispheres in the ballroom's glare to the lustful gaze, perhaps, of men who regard every pretty woman as their lawful prey? I am no he-prude. If called to act as Paris's substitute, and judge the unveiled glories of High Olympus' divine dames, I would scarce drop dead; but I do insist that when a mixed audience has looked into a lovely woman's face, and caught a glimpse through filmy lace of arms and shoulders which suggest Idalian Aphrodite rising from the Austral ocean's foam, it has seen enough. No man should be permitted to monopolize a woman's beauty; to hide it

in o'er prudish garb, as in an oriental harem; still he is entitled to be regaled with a glad surprise when he has wooed and won her. The plea that "To the pure all things are pure" is the language of unbridled license. *Honi soit qui mal y pense!* But alas! the average man is but a son of earth, and cannot look upon woman's unveiled loveliness with the pure ecstacy of a peri watching the golden banneretes of Aurora gilding the mountain's brow. The law of his life is passion, and love itself but the equity of this Draconia decree. A pure woman shrinks from the provocation of impure thoughts. Her mission is to ennoble, not to debase the mind of man, to bind, not loose the brute-breast ever present in his blood. She should move in an atmosphere as chaste as that of Eden instead of bearing with her the sensuous airs of Araby. Her beauty must suggest the Garden of God rather than the Grove of Daphne, else are we indeed undone.

To the second question I must return a decided negative. It is the library of lust, the song of the siren. A woman who adopts literature as a profession may read Boccaccio and his kind, just as the woman who would become an artist draws from the nude, or she who would practice surgery visit the dissecting room. She must sound all the depths and shoals of literature if she would be successful in the province of *belles-lettres*. But there is a vast difference between a young woman earnestly fitting herself for an exacting profession and one prowling about an atelier or hospital, or reading "promiscuously" for her own amusement. I would advise no young woman to plunge into French and Italian literature without a discriminating guide to "hang out red light"; and I may add, nor into any other. The lighter literature of England and America is becoming even more "suggestive" than what it strives to imitate. It borrows the

sensuality of the Decameron without its charm, the passion of Camille without its tragic power, the brutal frankness of the Confessions without its philosophy. There are more authors who are at once entertaining, instructive and pure than the average "young person" is likely to find time to peruse. "Can you on this fair mountain leave to feed, and batten on this moor!"

I must leave the drapery of the contestants for the ICONOCLAST's beauty prize entirely to their own discretion. Each has doubtless learned ere this in what she looks the best. This is to be no Homeric exhibit of Beauty unadorned for the benefit of a simple shepherd boy; still I would suggest that, as the portraits will not be exposed to public view, the objections herein urged to the ultra-decollete do not apply. A beautiful arm and bust are powerful adjuncts to a pretty face. It is desired that the winner in this contest be the world's most beautiful woman, both in face and form; and, as my correspondent doubtless knows, one does not connote the other. Artists not infrequently require many models from which to shape a perfect statue. Hebe in the habiliments of a prude could scarce have suggested to DuMaurier himself her supernal glory as the "altogether." Contestants are privileged to dress as they like and furnish only such information as they please; still a woman of perfect figure should, in justice to herself, furnish decollete photo, together with such measurements as will enable a committee to intelligently consider her claims. All such data will be treated as confidential.

SALMAGUNDI.

Barclay Holofernes Warburton, of the Philadelphia *Telegraph*, feels dreadfully bad, don'tcher knaw, because the American people continue to express their admiration for W. J. Bryan. He spills a whole column of spleen upon the great Nebraskan—gives a correct imitation of a buzzard puking on a thunderbolt. If the people choose to glorify Bryan what business is it of Barclay's? He is not an American. He is not even a fair representative of that class of insufferable cads and incroyables known as Hoxford Henglishmen. He's simply a gilded scab, who managed, by marrying John Wanamaker's daughter, to secure boodle as a substitute for brains. Barclay presume to criticize Bryan? Next thing we know the louse will be writing an essay on the lion! Scat, you snot! you haven't sense enough to find your own navel without assistance. Pack your canes, your resounding twousahs, and your tally-ho, and hie you back to Hengland, there to "blow yerself" among frowsy—barmaids, instead of remaining here "a dead easy mark" for superannuated ballet-girls. You should take off your hat and rinse your mouth with carbolic acid before uttering the name of Bryan. Git! slide! skedaddle before some sure-enough American Sovereign inadvertently expectorates on you and drowns you.

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Mrs. Castle, the wealthy "kleptomaniac," is again at large, and people having portable property would do well to keep it under lock and key. The Castle case proves conclusively that wealth is a power throughout the world. Only possess enough of it and you may commit with impunity any crime in the calendar. After an extensive shop-lifting tour this woman was apprehended in London.

There was no doubt regarding her guilt. It was conclusively proven that her pilfering propensities must have been known to her husband, yet the latter had made no effort to restore to its rightful owners the fruits of her robberies. If we may believe the testimony of a prominent London furrier, Mr. Castle "went cahoots" with his enterprising better half and did not disdain to occasionally lend a hand. After an exhaustive trial Mrs. Castle was sentenced to three months' "seclusion" without labor. On the same day a hard working seamstress and governess were sentenced to six and nine months respectively for appropriating trifles belonging to other people. These latter were never suspected of being kleptomaniacs. Although their first offense, they were catalogued as common thieves and are now grubbing out their sentences in jail. After a few days "seclusion" Mrs. Castle's health "grew delicate" and she was released—"to oblige Mr. Bayard." If the governess deserved nine months for a petty peculation inspired by poverty, Mrs. Castle should have been given nine years and required to "sweat it out." Kleptomania, dipsomania and nymphomania are diseases which attack only people boasting fortunes of seven figures. Their correlatives among the poor are thievery, drunkenness and prostitution. The public insists upon dropping gilded euphemisms and calling a spade a spade.

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Mark Hanna declares that in the recent campaign he "had one hand on the Almighty and the other on McKinley, and they couldn't beat that combination." We knew he had one hand on McKinley's collar; but what we want to know is whether the other rested on that part of the Almighty which was revealed to Moses. Rev. Henry E. Barnes, who gained much coveted notoriety by writing an open letter to Mr. Bryan, accusing him of blasphemy

in using the crown of thorns metaphor, should now take Brother Hanna in hand.

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The presidential campaign brought the usual herd of braying burros to the front; but perhaps the longest eared ass in the corral was Bill Dittman, secretary of the Dittman Shoe Co., St. Louis. He is one of those men who foolishly imagine that because they have many dollars they likewise possess much sense. That's where Bill blunders. The fox has no high order of intellect, yet it feeds on fat geese. The acquisitive faculty is but the vulpine instinct on two legs, and does not argue intellectuality. Bill despised the old adage that the shoe-maker should stick to his last, entered practical politics and made a juicy bid for the jackass pennant. He discharged a salesman for having voted the Democratic ticket, and denounced all who approved the Chicago platform as "hoodlooms" and "damned fools." Just why the insulted salesman didn't take Bill tenderly but firmly by the goozle, back him up against a brick wall and choke him until his tongue hung out like a side of sole-leather I have not been informed. Perhaps he was physically unable to administer that chastisement for which Bill was stinking; but there are gun-stores in St. Louis, and an ounce of powder "makes us equally tall." Had he secured an open-faced shot-gun and requested Bill to take down his pantalettes and expose his rear elevation to the farish light of day to be comfortably kicked with a pair of No. 9 brogans of his own manufacture he would have scarce refused; for men who gratuitously insult their employees are invariably short on "Sand." It affords me pleasure to call the especial attention of a million shoe-wearing Democrats to Bill Dittman, and I shall see to it that they do not forget him in the near future. Bill is a

rare bird and should be studied until thoroughly understood. Of course, all Democratic shoe-dealers will give the Dittman Co. the preference when placing orders for goods, while the rest of us d—d fools and hoodlums will heap coals of fire on its head by purchasing its footwear and swelling its bank account. The advertising rates of the ICONOCLAST are somewhat expensive; but as a special compliment to the Dittman Shoe Co. of St. Louis, I will run this paragraph a few months free of cost. The Democrats of the South and West are entitled to know how Bill regards them, that they may properly reciprocate the courtesy.

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Dr. Haley L. Wood, of Phila., has raised the question: Where was Methuseleh during the Deluge? "He figures it out that the old patriarch had ten months to live when the cataclysm came, that he failed to secure passage with Captain Noah, while "every living creature perished without the ark and every man." What a chump is this Phila. doctor! Methuseleh was drowned in the Deluge. The ark floated for a year, and Methuseleh, being a good Baptist, swam after it for ten months before he got full of water and gave up the ghost. The next time Dr. Wood becomes puzzled over the apparent inconsistencies of the Bible he can save himself much foolish brain-fag by calling up the ICONOCLAST.

. . .

John Bull said, "I'll be d—d if I do!" Your Uncle Samuel softly murmured, "You'll be d—d if you don't." Then the would-be bully of the world reconsidered, and took Venezuelan arbitration in his'n as gracefully as though 'twere his mother's milk. Salisbury is rapidly recovering from the effects of the humiliation, but Josef Phewlitzer is completely crushed.

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The Natchez (Miss.) *Democrat* and *Courtier* has discovered "the antitheis of Mr. Bryan" in Grover Cleveland! Quite correct. No two men living are more unlike. Cleveland is slow, dull, lymphatic; Bryan quick, bright, ardent. Cleveland thinks from the standpoint of the plutocrat, Bryan from that of the people. The first was an old libertine wallowing around with disreputable widows; the last is the Sir Galahad of American politics. Cleveland gets "drunker-r'n Billy-b-d—d"; Bryan never becomes "suddenly indisposed" and has to be doctored with bromo-seltzer. The first suggests a keg of sour-beer; the latter an intellectual thunderbolt. Cleveland runs chiefly to belly and Bryan to brains. The first is a Daniel Lambert, the latter a James Fitzjames. Yes, one is the exact antithesis of the other. Our toad-eating little contemporary at Natchez Under-the-Hill is correct thus far, but slips an eccentric when it classes its adipose hero among the great makers of epigrams. His "public office is a public trust," and "a condition not a theory confronts us" are old as Alcibiades and may even antedate the Deluge. Copyrighting them for Cleveland were like applying for a patent on a straight mark. "Innocuous desuetude" is the only original expression of Mr. Cleveland's that has become current with the people. They applauded it for the same reason that an audience of British cabbies cheered Canon Wilberforce's "heterogeneous amalgam." They quote it much as Bill Nye might have quoted the Baron of Bradwardine or Doctor Dulcamara. Not one man in a million knew what Mr. Cleveland meant, and the paragraphers immortalized his ridiculous pedantry. Mr. Bryan would have said "harmless disuse" and escaped the arrows of ridicule while making himself understood. The D-Ç slops all over Cleveland. It declares him brilliant, honest, courageous and brands as

"fools" and "cowards" all who deny that he is "one of the grandest men in American history." There is evidently something amiss with our contemporary's puckering string. It reminds me of the umprintable rhyme made by Bobby Burns when laid hold of by a policeman on the bridge of Leith. Bobby was full to overflowing, and if it wouldn't go down it had to come up regardless of the comfort of bystanders. I am pleased to know that Mr. Cleveland is not in the immediate vicinity of the D-C man. He is so "brilliant" that in a time of profound peace he was able to increase the national debt and precipitate a panic; so "honest" that in a few years of office-holding he has accumulated a stupendous fortune; so "courageous" that the leaders of his own party, the men to whom he owes his election, have dubbed him "that obstinate ass," and mournfully contrast his impudent Caesarism with the meek and lowly spirit of the mighty Lincoln. Future historians will, as the D-C suggests, do justice to Cleveland. They will place him by the side of "My Policy" Johnson and write upon their sarcophagi, "Here lie the lineal descendants of Balaam's burro."

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Bishop Worthington of the Episcopal Church, Omaha, Neb., has received a great deal of adverse criticism for declaring that "we have carried our free educational system too far in this country." And yet the worthy Bishop was but putting in a lick in line with the law of self-preservation. He had doubtless observed that the better educated a people the less inclined they are to support in luxury a lot of fat-jawed Bishops who teach that the licentious beast known as King Henry VIII was the Vicar of God. It is a fact so patent that it could not have 'scaped the notice of even an Episcopalian Bishop, that free education has a tendency to raise doubts anent the truth of

certain ridiculous dogmas whose exploitation enables him to fill his paunch with the fat of the land while infinitely better men hover ever on starvation's brink. Bishop Worthington acts wisely in opposing education. If permitted to continue, it will abridge his power, reduce his rations and render him ridiculous.

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We get out of patience with the nigger sometimes; still we could not well spare him. He is a perennial circus, an everlasting free minstrel show. The following from the Baptist Safeguard (suggestive title) is worth perusing:

"Resolutions adopted.—State of Mississippi, County of Madison.—Known to all men of Madison County, Mississippi, that we the citizens of Beat No. 4, of said County and State aforesaid, met at New Truelight Church, and called a meeting to consult our minds, whether or not, that we could or should take some steps to classify and elevate our race. After the meeting was called together and much debate, a motion was made and carried as follows: Whereas, we have seen so much reflection and disgraces brought upon respectable people by others living in adultery. Therefore, be it Resolved: That we call a meeting in the city of Canton, to take actions for the same November 7, 1896. Therefore it is hoped that every church and honored household will take a part in participating in the matter. Our object we have in view is this: Whereas, the woman giving birth to children without a lawful father, shall be made to pay $25 and if said heir is a mulato, the same shall pay $50. Respt. Rev. E. B. Wair."

Graded stock will come a trifle high in Mississippi if Brer Wair is allowed to have his way; but I presume that he will allow the fees to be paid on the installment plan.

He should seek the assistance of Bro. Early, of Texas, in drafting his bill.

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The Dallas *News* informs a correspondent in quest of information that "the sufferings of Northern soldiers in Southern prisons" was largely due to "the injudicious acts of President Davis." The honored chief of the Lost Cause is no longer on earth to answer for himself—and any lousy jackass can kick a dead lion. That there was much suffering among the federal prisoners at Andersonville and elsewhere has never been denied; but the high esteem in which Mr. Davis was held by many great and good men North, both before and after the war is sufficient answer to the puerile libel of our little-esteemed contemporary. Since the *Dal-Gal* followed G. Cleveland into the Republican camp it has developed a remarkable admiration for force-bills, and taken to writing Southern history from the standard of Albion W. Tourgee.

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Mr. B. Dreeben, of Rusk, Texas, has taken the Iconoclast to task for saying that King Solomon was the fruit of an infamous liason. He assures me that the first child born to David and Bath-Sheba was an illegitimate, but that Solomon, the second, was all right, as the King of Israel had made the gay young widow his wife. Friend Dreeben has fallen into two errors while trying to correct a purely imaginary one on the part of the Iconoclast. All the children of David and Bath-Sheba were born in wedlock, and were therefore legitimate according to the law; but just the same they were, as the Iconoclast stated, the fruit of an infamous liason. The fact that David and Bath-Sheba wedded before their first child came into the world did not atone for the cowardly slaughter of Uriah and their ante-nuptual intimacy. A

marriage bought with blood and preceded by debauchery is itself a sacrilege, a hypocritical insult to the Most High. Whatever his personal virtues may have been, Solomon was a child of shame—conceived in sin and brought forth in inquiry. The father should have been hanged and his mother "vagged."

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"J.M.D." of Hot Springs, Ark., also rises to question the rulings of the ICONOCLAST's biblical court. He says:

"You say there is nothing in the Old Testament that teaches the immortality of the soul. What does David mean when he says of his son, 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me?'"

I did not make the statement which "J.M.D." attributes to me. I said that "the early biblical religion did not recognize the immortality of the soul," and added that this doctrine was, at a later date, introduced into the cultus of Jehovah. After the return of the Jews from their Babylonian captivity we begin to see passages in their writings which indicate that this purely pagan concept was affecting the Mosaic teachings of temporal rewards and punishments; but it had not been accepted as an article of faith in the time of Solomon. The mother of the child for whom David mourned was not a Jewess, and he may have followed the example of other Kings of Israel and swerved somewhat from the faith of his fathers. Still there is naught in the quotation given to indicate that he meant other than that when dead he would be laid beside his son.

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C. H. Hanford, of Seattle, Wash., is a name that should be embalmed in history. Hanford is the would-be panjandrum of the federal judiciary. He occupies the highly honorable position of U. S. district judge, but is so small

that he rattles around in the large office like a dried buckeye in a bass drum. It is supposed that the federal judiciary—especially under the Cleveland regime—is far removed from partisan politics. Time was when high and mighty federal officials got the public udder pulled out of them with a derrick for indulging so "pernicious activity" as the making of a partisan speech; but those halcyon days have gone glimmering since the cuckoo coop was padlocked and turned over to Major McKinley. Judge Hanford announced that indorsement of the Chicago platform was *prima facie* evidence of disloyalty to the American government, and for that reason he would appoint no Democrats to be U. S. court commissioners. "Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed that he hath grown so great?" Who empowered him to indict, try and condemn more than thirty million people on a charge of high treason? With all due respect to his judicial dignity, Judge Hanford is the east-end of a westbound horse. I stood squarely upon the Chicago platform, and the man who accuses me of disloyalty to the flag of my fathers is an infamous liar. The Democrat who chanced to be nearest Judge Hanford when he delivered himself of his insulting falsehood should have held him up by the ear and put a boot so far under his coattails that he could taste leather all the rest of his life. President Cleveland's attention has been called to the bad break of this lying brute; but that gentleman, who in the gladsome erstwhile was wont to forego duck-hunts and chip off official heads for smaller offenses, and then proclaim from the housetops that the public's servants must not soil their white silk gloves with the mire of partisan politics, has grown strangely deaf in the ear which he turns to the wild and wooly West, and Judge Hanford still holds his job. The presence of such an intellectual

animalcule on the bench is not calculated to inspire respect for the federal courts. Government by injunction under such conditions were equivalent to placing the state at the mercy of a vicious monster with the head of a pismire. I have taken some trouble to size Hanford up, and his acquaintances inform me that before his appointment he was regarded as a fourth-rate lawyer who knew less about more things than any other man in America; that he was never known either to "setemup" or decline a drink at another's expense; that he has an eye like a dead catfish, while the touch of his hand suggests the clammy flapper of a decayed frog. The people of Washington will gladly take up those McKinley notes held by Mark Hanna if the president-elect will give Hanford a permanent position at the antipodes.

. . .

Mr. Samuel Gompers being asked by an inquisitive clergyman why so many intelligent workingmen do not attend church, bluntly replied that it is because "the churches are no longer in touch with the hopes and aspirations of workingmen and are out of sympathy with their miseries and burdens"—because "the pastors either do not know, or have not the courage to declare from their pulpits the rights and wrongs of the toiling millions." That is a terrible arraignment; but that it contains much truth was amply evidenced by the activity of the pulpiteers in behalf of the plutocracy during the late campaign. Christ was a carpenter and the Apostles poor men; but the average preacher of to-day is a disgusting toady of Dives.

. . .

Gov. Culberson proves himself strangely ungrateful in not having publicly thanked the Gal-Dal *News* for his re-election. It is a great pity our contemporary hasn't

a national circulation—its opposition would have put Bryan in with votes to burn.

. . .

Mr. Brann: What do you think of the manner in which the yellow metal has come out of retirement since the election of McKinley?

Goldbug.

It is exactly what the Iconoclast predicted. Among our 70 million people there are, unfortunately, many fools who were frightened by the Republican falsehood that the election of Bryan meant an immediate slump to the "50-cent dollar," and who hoarded every piece of gold they could get. Having thrown Uncle Sam into financial fits by means of a deliberate falsehood, the Republican leaders have the impudence to take credit for his cure. It was their dishonest calamity howl which drove gold into hiding and paralyzed the commerce and industry of the country. That's what I think. What do you think? Have you really got into the habit of ratiocinating? Or is your head merely a foolish phonograph, stupidly parroting the ideas of others?

. . .

Mr. McKinley has not yet tendered me a cabinet portfolio; but should he offer me the secretaryship of state I would make the sacrifice simply because of the pleasure it would afford me to recall that Anglo-maniacal ass, Ambassador Bayard, and advise him to do his slobbering over John Bull in the capacity of a private citizen.

. . .

Up to the hour of going to press the Houston *Post* has managed to come out regularly every morning, despite the $30,000 deed of trust which dangles above it like the sword of Damocles. I suspected that the *Post* would

have rather hard sledding when I compelled it to purify its putrid "personal" column, cease running ads for honk-a-tonks and making its counting room an assignation postoffice, a broker shop for bawdry. I thought at the time of Shylock's plaitive lament that "you take my life when you do take the means whereby I live"; but I couldn't help it. Five years ago the people of Houston, fearing that such a feculent sheet would advertise their fair city as a second Sodom, appealed to the ICONOCLAST to purify it. I gave it a carbolic acid bath and it hastened to abolish its assignation annex. It has never dared reestablish it; but about a year ago it attempted to dodge the iconoclastic interdict and pick up a few pennies by publishing a directory of the red-light district. It "interviewed" the keepers of the different dives on some flimsy pretext giving the exact location of each and the number of its "boarders," as well as the sanitary condition of the merchandise offered for sale. Again the ICONOCLAST was appealed to by the Houston people, and the bawdy-house "interviews" were quickly abandoned. *The Post* became so good that it was selected as his official mouthpiece by Gov. Culberson, that paragon of morality. It appears, however, that there's no altering the habits of the vulture or preventing the dog returning to its vomit. Again the Houston people are complaining of the putridity of their morning paper and sending me unclean ads. clipped from its columns. One is of nude pictures that can be "sent only by express," another of a nostrum warranted "more effectual than Pennyroyal Pills." In other words, the *Post* is informing its lady readers—if any such it has—where an improvement on the old abortion medicine may be had, and advising the youth of Harris county how to secure pictures so indecent that an attempt to forward them by mail would get the in-

famous purveyor into the penitentiary. This is by no means so bad as the picnic lingerie ads. that used to appear in its columns; but the *Post* is too evidently determined to descend again to the profoundest depths of journalistic degradation in pursuit of the long green. It has changed neither editorial nor business management since it was the recognized organ of Happy Hollow and allowed old libertines to use its columns to secure clandestine meetings with little school-girls. In those days it was so fetid that a decent nigger would not touch it with a pair of tongues. It was foul with a filthiness such as Shakespeare attributes to flies, rank with a rottenness which reflected the character of those moral perverts and intellectual degenerates who are still shaping its destiny. It was a blotch on the fair name of Texas, a chancre on the body social of the South. I have tried to reform the *Post*, but only succeeded in compelling it to assume for a time a virtue it never possessed. The frequent recrudescence of its corruption compels the conclusion that it's an incorrigible—a public cloaca, an incurable cancer, a natural prostitute. Like Trinculo, " my nose is in a great indignation," and I here give o'er the task of protecting the respectable home of Harris county from the noxious fumes of Texas' matutinal polecat. Perchance that deed of trust will prove more potent in the good cause than has the ICONOCLAST.

* * *

THE ICONOCLAST'S BEAUTY CONTEST.

IT appears that many people supposed my proposition—made in a recent number of the ICONOCLAST—to pay $500 for the privilege of looking five minutes at the most beautiful woman in the world, was merely a " take-off "

on the bad practice of the American press of printing the portraits and extolling the beauty of society belles. The offer was made in good faith. I propose to find the handsomest woman on the globe and give her $500 in gold for the privilege of looking five minutes at her fair face. In days of old chivalric knights rode in quest of the Holy Grail; why should not I search the wide world through for that perfect Beauty which the philosophers tell us is the quintessential of all Truth? Were it not time and money better spent than in prowling about the tawdry art galleries of Europe or going into bogus ecstacies over the crumbling ruins of ancient Rome? I have no apologies to offer for desiring to look upon the world's loveliest woman. I want it understood, however, that this is no catchpenny "scheme," intended to fill the coffers of the ICONOCLAST—no "voting contest," such as recently became so popular with an inpecunious press. The privilege I ask is worth ten times what I offer, and will cost no one but myself a cent. I see no objection to ladies entering this contest. If the winner be poor, the money paid as a tribute to her matchless beauty will not come amiss; if rich, she can donate it to some deserving charity. The contest has been advertised in every part of the world, and the houris of the Orient will compete with the peris of the Occident. At the suggestion of several ladies who reside in foreign lands and under sunnier skies, the minimum age of contestants has been reduced to 15 years, they having called attention to the fact that in several countries famed for beauty, maids mature much earlier than with us. The date upon which the contest will be determined has been extended to February 10, in order to give the ladies of the far East ample time to forward their photographs. Up to the present writing the countries represented in the contest are as follows:

The United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Italy and Denmark. Our American jasmine buds may judge from this what they've got to "go against," and prepare to look their prettiest. Of the American states, Tennessee leads in the number of candidates for Beauty's crown, Texas second and Ohio third. Of the cities, St. Louis furnishes the largest number of contestants, New Orleans second, Dallas and San Antonio being a tie for third place. Thus far Waco hasn't a single aspirant for the Golden Apple. All photos must be at least cabinet size, and taken within the year. Accompanying each must be sender's address, height, weight, size of glove and shoe worn, color of eyes and hair. Bust and waist measurements would materially assist the judges in determining the contest; but these may be given or withhled at the option of the aspirant. It is needless to say that all data furnished will be treated as confidential. On February 10 next, a committee of connoisseurs, appointed by the mayors of Galveston and Dallas, will inspect the photos and make the award. The names of unsuccessful candidates will not be revealed, and immediately after the decision is rendered, their portraits and correspondence will be destroyed. One week thereafter I will set forth on my pilgrimage to the shrine of the world's loveliest woman, no matter in what land or clime she lives. For further particulars consult the November ICONOCLAST.

* * *

THE AMERICAN MIDDLE-MAN.

ONE of the most peculiar turns the bucolic mind has yet taken is that which leads him to regard the "middleman" as a useless wheel in the world's industrial ma-

chinery, one that must be got rid of before the "producer" can prosper. By middle-man the forks-of-the-creek economist usually means the merchant, the man who buys of the producer and sells to the consumer. The gentlemen who get together at the "Grange" or "Alliance" pow-wow and manufacturer their own political economy from the raw material, figure out that every dollar the merchant makes they lose; that he is living on their labor, and they proceed with great unanimity and enthusiasm to whereas and resolute him out of existence. They will dispense with his services; will be their own purveyors—will deal with the consumers direct, put the merchant's "exhorbitant" profits in their own pockets and complacently contemplate the bulge. They subscribe money, start a "co-operative store" and consider that, like Alexander, they have cut the Gordian knot and the world is their oyster. But somehow the combination does not work exactly as they had expected. Figure it as they will they cannot find that they are better off than when attending strictly to their own business. The "great saving in price" is nowhere apparent, and the "enormous profits" too often take the form of assessments. Finally the sheriff takes charge of the concern, and the whilom merchants conclude that it is the banker who is playing Old Man of the Sea to their Sinbad, and the devil is to pay again. They may not have "gumption" enough to steer a country store clear of the commercial quicksands, but they never doubt their competency to reform the great world's financial system; they may not be able to successfully trade in soap and tripe, but they know just how much per capita this big country needs to keep it clear of bankruptcy! The bucolic economist never considers aught but his individual interest; the chief article in his politico-economic confession of faith is plunder instead of

patriotism. He would gladly grab the earth and the fullness thereof, if he but knew how, then chase into the sea every other man who had the temerity to make a living. He considers that his class is the only one extant having any right on the earth; that all others are usurpers who exist only by his sufferance. The merchant is as truly a "producer" as the man who plows and sows; as necessary a factor in our industrial system as the shoemaker or carpenter. The more perfect our system of exchange, the greater will be the division of labor and the production of wealth. The merchant is a labor-saving machine. He does the necessary work, does it better and with far less expenditure of energy than the community could perform it for itself. The merchant is not a parasite fastened upon labor, but its patron. His store is a mart to which every man, be he farmer or physician, "able editor" or actor, brings his produce and exchanges it for the production of others. Each store is a ganglion from which energy radiates to every part of the great industrial organism. No fear that there will be "too many" of these nerve centers, "a plethora of middle men for labor to support," as one writer puts it. The industrial organism regulates that without the need of superintendence by grange-made economists or others. The more middle-men the less will so-called "productive labor" have to pay for the exchange service, the better will it be done. Competition will attend to that, cutting the merchant's commission to the minimum, starving the less skillful out. If we had but one merchant here in the village of Waco instead of many, does any suppose that we could buy as cheaply as now? The competition of the many, by cutting down the commissions of middlemen and enabling each producer to exchange his products for more of those of others, to demand more comforts in

exchange for his labor, stimulates industry and adds to the wealth and intelligence of the community. Those orators and crank editors who are yooping about "the burden which the support of so many middle-men entails upon labor" should be gagged with their own stupid nescience. The greatest burden which labor staggers under consists of would-be political economists and self-constituted "reformers,"—men with lower-case brains and large cap mouths, who are ever inducing it to bump its head against a brick wall.

* * *

"IS IT A CRIME TO BE RICH?"

Bishop John P. Newman, of the M. E. church, has been asking himself the foregoing question in the religious press, and, after much labored lucubration, gives in a verdict of "not guilty." I gather from the good man's cross-examination of himself that the wealthy come near monopolizing the "Christian virtue" of this world—that all great fortunes are the result of "industry, economy and frugality." I must confess that I had not hitherto suspected it. He enumerates the colleges, libraries, houses of refuge, etc., endowed by the big rich, and assures us that in the various American wars the plutocrats poured forth their wealth like water for the preservation of our common country. I knew they showed up considerable "stuff" on Uncle Sam's game of some years agone, but had hitherto supposed that they received six per cent gold bonds in exchange for depreciated greenbacks. If I have done these disinterested patriots a grievous wrong I hasten to apologize. The Bishop cites Abraham and Job, Washington and Jefferson as millionaires who loved their fellow men, and seems to have reached the conclusion

that for a man to stand on starvation's brink and rail at vast accumulations of boodle is the chief of crimes. That is one side of the shield. I assume that he employs the word "crime" as synonymous with "sin," else were his argument but wasted effort, the possession of great wealth constituting no crime as measured by the law of the land. I regret to note that his conclusions are strangely at variance with those of Christ, and much fear that I will have to remove him from his episcopal see for incorrigible heterodoxy. I dislike to discipline Brother Newman, but the good man talks too much. Only a short time ago I was compelled to rebuke him for preaching a very doubtful brand of partisan politics from his pulpit, and now he's gone clear wrong on one of the fundamentals of the Methodist faith. "Is it a crime to be rich?" In the language of the late Artemus Ward, "it are." It is a sin to waste while worthy people want. My reverend sir, we men of God are not privileged to decide this question from the stand-point of the money changers whom our Master denounced as a pack of Wall street thieves and sent out of the temple clamoring for arnica and spirits of turpentine. We must consider it only in the light of that all-embracing love which we call Religion. I have no idea how many talents of gold or shekels of silver Abraham and Job could have gotten for their live-stock and wool under the McKinley tariff; but imagine that had they clubbed their fortunes they could not have coppered Brother Rockefeller's bank account. However, they lived under the old dispensation, when power and wealth constituted the Ultima Thule of happiness, the limit of human hope. My recollection of these gentleman is to the effect that the Devil had a very interesting time with one, and should have given a turn at the other. In those old days riches were an especial

mark of Divine favor; but we are taught to despise the vanities of this world and lay up our treasures in heaven. To be a Christian is to be Christ-like. What would the Master have done with a million o' money? He would have expended the last farthing of it covering naked backs and filling empty bellies! Imagine Peter or Paul clipping six per cent coupons! Consider John the Baptist in possession of Rockefeller's boodle. Imagine the Virgin Mary togged out in Parisian garb with diamond stomacher, attending a swell "function," leaving the Divine Infant to the tender mercy of a French maid! Consider Mary Magdalen in the role of Mrs. J. Coleman Drayton, or Alva Smith-Vanderbilt-Belmont. Instead of forgiving her sins the Nazarene would have broken her pate with a fence picket. When a man gets chock full of the grace o' God he cannot freeze to great wads of the long green while in the same city babes are put hungry to bed and women are dying of want. He does not build himself an ante-mortem monument in the shape of a college, nor set aside so much per annum to provide a home for antiquated cats or to carry hymn-books to Timbuctoo, hoping thereby to purchase a passport to heaven, to acquire a corner lot on the Fifth Avenue of the Celestial City—or at least see himself continually referred to in the Daily Slobber as a triple-plated philanthropist and public-spirited citizen. He denies himself all luxuries that others may have the necessaries of life. When you see a man smoking a dollar cigar, and a tramp trailing him around to "shoot the snipe"; when you see him clad in purple and fine linen and picking *pate de foie gras* out of his teeth while famished children fish a breakfast out of his garbage barrel, when you see him stabling his horses in a palace while human beings are huddled like swine in a comfortless hovel, you can gamble that what he considers his religion is only

a torpid liver. It is true that there are thousands of wretched creatures whose poverty is due to their own improvidence—the "unfit," whom remorseless nature seems determined to weed from the world; but—what are we Christians here for? If all people were as they should be there would be precious little use for preachers. It were well to consider whence came these "incapables?" We had practically none of them a century ago—before manufacturing those multimillionaires who, according to Bishop Newman, are doing so much for mankind. Has the nature of the American people undergone so radical a change in a single century? Or is it untoward industrial conditions that is filling the land with plutocrats and paupers? Is the pressure of so many colossal fortunes on the shoulders of the common people crushing even more and more of them into the mire? Wealth, be it remembered, is not self-supporting; it must be constantly fed by the man who breaks bread in the sweat of his brow. It is continually perishing, and must be as continually replaced by a toll taken from the fruits of toil. Before me is a New York paper in which the jewels of six society ladies—all church members—are illustrated. Beneath the illustrations in this line: "Diamonds worth more than $25,000,000 worn at the opera last evening." I turn the leaf and find an illustration of hundreds of hungry men who stood ankle deep in the snow for hours to receive the stale loaves of bread given away by a charitable baker! Yet Bishop Newman would have us believe that enormous wealth in the possession of a "Christian" is a virtue rather than a vice! I suggest that he take as text for his next sermon the insolent exclamation of Cain —"Am I my brother's keeper?" He should be able to handle the subject in a manner particularly soothing to the conscience of an ultra-fashionable congregation. No

one expects a man of means to open his purse to every beggar who may ask his aid—to impoverish himself in the promotion of chronic pauperism; but he need not go far to find deserving poor if he would play the good Samaritan. In every corner of this so-called Christian land can be found destitute people who have fought the battle of life with more than Spartan bravery, only to be overcome by misfortunes which no human wisdom could foresee. It is these people, in whose hearts Hope lies dead while Pride still lives—these whom the public charities so seldom reach—who deserve not only a helping hand, but that kindness and encouragement which only those can give who have felt upon their lips the breath of God. I have been accused of mocking at religion. I admit that I do not believe the biblical cosmogony or the snake story of Mother Eve. I imagine that most of the old prophets should have been given a plunge bath and put on the rock-pile. I object to being dressed in feathers after death and having to work overtime hymning and hosannahing. I can't, to save me, go into ecstasies of adoration over a gentleman to whom I have never been introduced. I give up nary a nickle to send fat missionaries to hungry heathen; but I agree with Christ that the man who hangs on to more wealth than he needs, while all about him people are driven to desperation by want, should be taken by the bust of the breeches and hurled headlong into Hell. The Great Nazarene may not have expressed himself in these exact words, but he gave us distinctly to understand that Heaven was not expressly reserved for human hogs. There is an economic as well as an ethical side to the question which Bishop Newman answers with such eminent satisfaction to himself. No American is ass enough to quarrel with those who acquire a competence by honest industry; the complaint is that a majority of those vast

fortunes of which the church has become the apologist are the direct or indirect fruits of dishonesty, railway-wrecking, stock-gambling, governmental favoritism obtained by fraud, combinations to reduce wages while advancing the price of labor's products—these are the means whereby a few eminent Christian ladies were enabled to wear $25,000,000 worth of diamonds to an opera while hundreds of men stood shivering half the night in a snowstorm for the blessed privilege of filling their stomachs with stale bread. These are not palatable truths to those fashionable preachers who have undertaken to substitute Dives for Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; but fact is not my fault. If Bishop Newman can convince St. Peter that a man's virtue should be estimated by the amount of boodle he has piled up in Eternity's portals he will have earned his fee; but I much fear his retainers will find the Celestial Through Line runs precious few Pullmans. It is very good of Brothers Rockefeller et al to make a bid for the world's applause by occasionally loosening their purse strings; still the thought will obtrude itself that but for their systematic robberies the people might not stand in such sore need of their adventitious aid. They too much resemble a highwayman who loots a stage-coach, then throws the despoiled passengers a dollar apiece. "Industry, economy and frugality," by themselves considered never yet enabled a man to amass a million o' money. No one is entitled to more of this world's wealth than he has created, or has been called into being for him by his ancestors; hence a fortune of many millions is *prima facie* evidence of fraud. This is a very new country, and precious few large patrimonies have been imported. Fortunes such as those of the Astors, Vanderbilts and Goulds could not have been created in a dozen generations, and having accumulated without being created they can repre-

sent nothing but robbery. The phenomenal growth of our cities has transformed many a poor man into a millionaire; oil wells have suddenly spouted forth fortunes, while plodding miners like Mackay have been lifted from poverty to affluence by a "happy hit." Certainly the individual cannot be blamed for profiting by these freaks of fortune; but what must the economist say of a system which utilized the public industry to enrich a drone, suffers a man to stand at the door of those treasure-houses established by Almighty God for all the children of men and take toil of his less fortunate fellows? That industrial system is evidently wrong which affords men of equal intellect and industry unequal opportunities. But perhaps I am exceeding the limits of Bishop Newman's Latin and challenging the withering scorn of those sciolist who study economics under the remarkable tuition of Edward Atkinson. The system is wrong; but it is here, and here to remain for some ages yet despite the frantic efforts of would-be reformers. The politicians are likely to do little to improve it, but the parson could—if they would—soften its asperities, make its inequalities more supportable. They could do this by pumping more Christian charity and brotherly kindness into their discourses, instead of regaling us with cock-and-bull stories anent the wealth of Jefferson and Washington, or trying to convince Almighty God that, having given us a world capable of supporting five billion people in comfort, He is responsible for the prevalence of abject poverty.

AS I WAS SAYING.

M. W. CONNOLLY.

How strange it is that no one has written a line about the late election! I will slip in on the boys and make a "scoop" on the broad-breasted universe by saying that the late campaign was a remarkable one in many respects, and I warn the public that I have letters patent on this observation and will prosecute, to the bitter end, any one who is or may be guilty of infringement of my rights. The late campaign was a revelation. Everybody knows how it resulted, and I know which side was in the right, but I will not tell until the audience is better prepared for the news. The goldbug whose credit at the lunch-counter was in a valetudinarian condition, acted mysteriously and with a dignified reserve, as if to court the suspicion that he was hoarding bags of the yellow metal and was afraid its character would be debased by mixing with the free-born white coins of the mint. I believe a great many people, enough to have turned the tide in the doubtful States, voted for McKinley with a view of flattering themselves with the delusion that they were members of the "creditor class," and deluding their creditors with the flattering hope of being paid at some future day. Men who would sell their immediate ancestors for spot cash; men who have lived by their wits; men who would swindle a blind cat out of a saucer of sour cream, and whose code of morals is the criminal statutes; men who never paid an honest debt which they could avoid, and who never avoided contracting a debt which they could incur, prated about national honor and the integrity of the public credit at home and abroad. They were in the swim; they were rated and berated as goldbugs, plutocrats, bankers and bondholders. To them the free silverite was

an agrarian, a plebian, a repudiator, a howling and fantastic chump. It was fashionable to be a goldbug; it was an evidence that you were with "the best people"; that you lined up with the "people who had something to loose"; that you were not akin to the "po' white trash" who were whooping it up for Bryan; that you could regard with equanimity the turbulent procession of enthusiasts that was passing in review before the eyes of the country. Towards the last, goldbuggering became "good form," and those who were at all ambitious of keeping up with the procession, "went in for that sort of thing." Thus the real goldbug, the banker, the business man, the farmer or the mechanic who believed in the present system of finance from conviction and patriotic intentions, had to follow with others of the breed whose credit at the store was nil, who were capitalists (nit), and who passed as men of substance with a wardrobe costing $2.35, and more than 70 per cent. of that not paid for. It was a curious compound, a ridiculous combination, a heterogenous mass, all huddled together for the purpose of forming a breakwater against the flood of free-silverism that at one time threatened to overwhelm the country.

. . .

There were others. The free-silverites had even a more motley crowd at roll-call. They conducted a political extravaganza that was odds from the fall of the flag to the wire. Theirs was the sentimental crusade, and it gave room for the exercise of all the freak talent lying around loose. It was a call to arms of the submerged, an invitation for the bottom rail to get on top and ride. Without reference to the men of sense and substance lined up on the free silver side, as they were on the goldbug side, the Bryan forces recruited regiments from the cranks and back numbers. The pariah and the prodigal found a home

and a welcome waiting him. The social misfit, the commercial failure, the disappointed aspirant, the host of has-beens, had the doors thrown open to them and an invitation extended. The political empiric joined the professional charlatan and howled for free silver. The hereditary helot and the illustrious idler joined the hatchet-faced, close-eyed intellectual manikin and were made men of full stature. And the oratory! God bless us! the woods was full of it, and it was all in favor of the laboring man and all furnished by men who never labored excepting with their lungs—or by proxy. Old chairwarmers who had passed their lives in waiting for something to turn up, became the self-constituted representatives of the laboring masses, the defenders of the oppressed and down-trodden. All the outcasts and ghosts of long ago rose up and took a hand in the game. Then man who raised a razor-back hog and a bale of bumble-bee cotton rose up and declared that the gamblers of Wall Street should not be permitted to put a price on our product before it is planted, and the sentiment was applauded. The man who sat on dry-goods boxes at the depot store and cultivated nothing but a crop of bunions on his vermiform appendix rose to his full majesty as one of the producing masses. Every man who had a talent for composition wrote a piece for the newspapers or made a speech and a highly ornate ass of himself on the hustings. Every man who had a grievance was permitted to air it. The flood-gates were opened and all the back waters of repressed feeling were permitted to pour through. More Patrick Henrys were discovered than were supposed to exist. The flapdoodelistic style of oratory was at a premium and the spellbinders and "powerful 'sputers" were heard in the land. Of all the funny things of the funny campaign, however, was the shabby gentile loafer who, representing nothing on God's

green earth, and aught in the waters beneath it (original) stood about with an ominous frown declaring that "something must be done," because things had reached that point where "the people wouldn't stand it any longer." Non-producing parasites came forth in droves to claim attention as "the people." One good has come of the financial agitation, and that is that an intelligent conception of the technical attributes of money has been disseminated. Up to the opening of the campaign the most intelligent could scarce tell whether money was redemption or primary money, and they cannot tell yet, but they think they can, and that is just as good. The majority of the people know little or nothing about the money question yet, with the exception of the few technical terms appertaining to it. With the majority of us its most conspicuous traits are elusiveness when pursued and its liability to escape after capture. The raising of two fingers and the nonchalant ejaculation "zwi beer!" sometimes inaugurates an exodus of coin that is never checked until the bottom is reached.

. . .

Are people less honest than formerly? I think so. Look at the courts—the dockets are crowded with civil suits for the collection of money due. People no longer consider it necessary to pay their debts. It is no longer dishonorable to owe a debt. In the olden times there were suits at law for the collection of debts, but they were usually to secure the judgment of the court so that a man who could not pay could be sent to jail and kept there. Of late years debts are paid only when they must be paid. Money may be borrowed only when the borrower can convince the lender that he stands ready and able to pledge something much more valuable than the amount of money desired. No man's word is good. To board with one's wife is no disgrace. To avoid creditors in any way the

law allows is a part of good business. Business is the all-destroying enemy of good morals. Dogs fight over a bone; men go to law over money matters. Anything that may be called business is respectable, no matter how unjust and dishonorable. This is because business is in itself immoral, and we are a business people. Good morals would dictate that value should be exchanged for value; business prescribes that one man shall secure as much of another's goods as possible for as little in return as possible. The very soul of business is to despoil the other fellow. It is a war of mutual spoilation that is being carried on unchecked except by law. This business idea has permeated the social fabric and polluted the public morals. From securing the most you can in a trade with your neighbor, it is only a step to depriving that neighbor of everything when the opportunity offers. Aggregated capital is merely the accumulated differences between the buying and selling prices. It means that when goods are purchased less than their value was paid for them, and that when the goods were sold, more than their value was received. A fair trade, that is, giving value received for articles, would mean no profit and no piled up fortunes. Fortunes are made in business by getting all you can for as small a return as possible. In other words, business is a condition of war where all the ingenuity of mankind is employed as bondwoman for human cupidity and where the question of morals does not enter. There is a nebulous sort of rule which guarantees a business man the right to a "fair profit" means all you can get and hold the trade. Competition keeps profit from becoming too exorbitant, but competition means that a rival is willing to forego a part of the profit rather than lose it all. There are men who pay their debts promptly and with scrupulous fidelity, not because they are moral

men, but because they are honest through policy. To be otherwise would injure their credit and lessen their capacity of depredating on other men. Hence the courts are full of lawsuits for the collection of debts and the enforcement of contract obligations and the delinquents hold their heads up in the communities in which they live, and if they succeed, are regarded as smart business men. Man's inhumanity to man is probably no worse now than it was in the days of savagery, when who had the power took what he could find and kept what he could hold; but it is with us still. Our savagery is somewhat refined, in that we go to law to protect us in the work of spoliation instead of appealing to the war-club or the knife.

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A PEN-PICTURE OF WATTERSON.

Editor Brann's Iconoclast: You have doubtless read the last carefully prepared "interview" of Henri Paradoxical Watterson. He has been on sides of every political question since his advent as a journalist; a traducer and vilifier of his own people while connected with the Cincinnati *Commercial-Gazette*, and equally as bitter and abusive of the "Yankees" after he mounted the editorial tripod of the *Courier-Journal;* an ardent advocate of free silver in '86, and an ultra gold monometallist in '96; predicted at Chicago in '92 that "if the Democracy nominated Cleveland, it would march through a slaughterhouse to an open grave"; for a score and a half years past the most inveterate gambler in America, and during the same period of time his greatest effort was to reduce the visible supply of Kentucky bourbon, while at the same time traipsing over the country delivering a lecture on "Money and Morals"; at one period of his life said some of the meanest things

about Mr. Lincoln, but now engaged in writing an eulogistic history of that great man; left Kentucky as a "bankrupt" gambler, and for ten further reasons that it was unsafe to strike a "lucifer" near his carcass for fear it would ignite the alcohol percolating through his hide, but now assuming, in a foreign land, to teach his countrymen, through verbose and windy "interviews," how to attain a sober and honest life; for years the most prolific predictor of any public writer in America, and yet not one of his forecasts has ever been verified; invisibly neutral in war and invincibly treacherous in peace, it is not surprising that his facile pen and ready use of language have always been the property of the highest bidder. Please serve him up in your next issue *secundum artem*, and knowing that you hate frauds, I feel that you will pardon me for calling your attention to this blatherskite and mountebank. M.

* * *

UNDER WHICH FLAG?

THE *Post*, which of all New York papers is worst afflicted with Anglomania, declares that the East will "punish" the South for having supported Bryan by refusing to loan capital for the development of Southern industries; but fails to state in what respect we will be worse off than formerly. Texas rolled up a "brutal majority" for one G. Cleveland, the most obsequious slave of Eastern capitalists that ever occupied the presidency; yet during his entire administration has begged in vain of Eastern capitalists for the wherewithal to develop her wonderful resources—the capitalists aforesaid preferring to plant their money in free-silver Mexico. During the past four years millions of Eastern and European cash has crossed the

State of Texas—rich in ore and timber and soil—to find a lodgment in the land of God and Liberty, to take chances with the "50-cent dollar" in the development of vast industries. On the very day the *Post* announced the boycott of the South by the "sound money men as punishment for its free-silver folly," the New York *Herald* stated that these same "sound money men" would build a new cotton factory at Orizaba, Mexico, to cost more than three millions. Why is it that the South, the garden-spot of the globe, must crawl at the feet of Eastern and European capitalists, and be spurned with contempt because of her "financial folly," while these same men, who are prating about "honest money," are wearing their tongues to a frazzle licking the feet of every two-by-four Mexican official? How comes that the East is in position to thus gratuitously insult the South?—to "punish" her for acting in accordance with her honest convictions? Is not the threatened boycott, by itself considered, a terrible arraignment of our present monetary system?—a system which exalts the creditor and degrades the debtor, which apotheosizes the money-changer and damns the producer? There must be something radically wrong when capital can say to the labor of a great and fruitful section of this country, "I will not enter into partnership with you and share the product, unless you consent to become my political peons." Should the boycott laid upon us become too grievous to be borne, perchance Mexico will consent to receive Texas back again—to extend her border to the Sabine. As the chief state of the sister Republic, Texas would have Wall Street's most distinguished consideration, and money would flow in for investment from both old and New England. Perhaps the blessed "sound money men" would even consider Waco a better location for a three million dollar cotton mill than Orizaba, Mexico. If we

must surrender our political privileges, it were certainly better to yield them to President Diaz, who is at least a patriot and deeply interested in the material welfare of his people, than to a coterie of selfish millionaires, whose only object is our despoilation. If the Southern people cannot preserve their manhood in the Union the quicker they get out of it the better. A dictator is not so bad as an oligarchy. The interests of the West, the South and Mexico are commutual, but as divergent from those of the East as from those of England. As the people on the thither side of the Alleghenies have set us the example of consulting only self-interest, why should we not follow suit? Or, as the East loves England and all things English, perhaps it could get itself annexed to Canada and leave to us the flag it has learned to despise. It would find contentment—and coronets—under the ægis of the "mother country." It would then have nothing further to fear from "free-silver fanatics" from what the *Fortnightly Review* terms "the mean, the illiterate and unprosperous Westerners and Southerners who have come to regard their motherland as a foul malignant octopus." It looks very much as though the federal blanket was destined to soon become "too short at one end" to cover this entire country. Will the East provide itself with another, or shall we?

* * *

A DISGRACE TO CIVILIZATION.

Under the above caption Carrie Stevens Walter, writing in the *Santa Clara*, proceeds to "roast" a custom that has long been a damning disgrace to American jurisprudence. The scene described is such as can be witnessed in every American city, almost any day in the year. The Iconoclast not only approves the remedy proposed, but

urges, as it has so often done before, that divorce trials likewise be held behind closed doors, instead of being made public spectacles for the entertainment of the prurient. I scarce know whether it be worse for a wronged husband to suffer his shame in silence, or publicly brand the woman who bears his name—and who may be the mother of his children—as a wanton; whether it be more painful for a proud woman to suffer humiliation at the hands of a brute husband, or be compelled to take the average court-room crowd into her confidence, and then see every detail of her testimony flaunted in the public prints.

"Recently a most aggravated case came up before the Township Justice of San José, a case in which a poor, innocent young girl was compelled to appear as a witness against the brute in human form who had criminally assaulted her. A lady physician—a gentle, cultured woman—was also a witness in the case.

"Under any circumstances for either of these women to appear before a magistrate and tell the dreadful tale they had to tell, would have been trying in the extreme. But what was the shrinking agony of these witnesses to find the court room filled with a crowd of men and boys ranging from fifteen years of age, many smoking cigarettes and all alert and tittering as the harrowing evidence was wrung from the almost fainting girl, and the little less embarrassed physician. In this atmosphere, reeking with tobacco smoke and close with the breath of such a crowd, the complaining witness was subjected to a cross-examination from the defendant's attorney, that was described to me as 'unspeakable in a suggestiveness that sent the crowd into illy-repressed convulsions of titters.' To the credit of Justice Dyer, be it explained, that he did all in his power to keep the defendant's lawyer within bounds, and the crowd orderly. The young girl—an Italian who

spoke very little English—by her modest terror and her pitiful shrinking should have appealed to the manhood of every man born of a mother, but she was put through the same heartless ordeal that the most depraved and hardened woman in the city would have been subjected to, in the same position. I was told that in the crowd of gaping boys listening to the cross-examination of the poor girl were sons of prominent people, of fathers and mothers who perhaps did not for a moment suspect where their sons were. In the name of humanity, cannot such a condition of things be changed. When a woman has been subjected to the greatest crime that could be inflicted upon her, and is forced to ask in a court of justice the punishment of a fiend who has been worse than her murderer, it is a disgrace to civilization, yes, to savagery, to compel her to face a crowd of prurient hangers-on of a court room, who come not as American manhood should come—seeking to defend the honor of womanhood—but as a flock of carrion crows grabbing for filthy morsels. Shame! shame upon such a condition of things! Think of it, men with innocent daughters and sister, who may be, God knows, exposed some day to such outrage. Think of it, parents of sons who are thus exposed to contamination from being permitted to witness such a travesty upon justice, and herding with such a crowd as would seek a scene of this sort from idle motive. When a case of this kind comes up before a magistrate it should be made a misdemeanor to permit any but necessary parties to be in attendance. In this case the victim was a poor Italian girl, with only a young brother to defend her, and who, to his credit be it said, had attempted to kill his sister's assailant, but unfortunately failed. But doubtless the outrage of this "trial" to her modesty was as keenly, as cruelly felt as if she had been the sister of a millionaire. In the name of woman-

hood and boyhood, yes, and manhood, I ask that these outrages be made impossible."

. . .

At a banquet in Brooklyn recently John Sherman made a bitter attack on Grover Cleveland, which moves the Silver Knight to say that for the first time it sympathizes with the president. "We cannot think of any greater humiliation for any man than to be despised by John Sherman. If there could possibly be greater degradation it would be if John Sherman were despised by Grover Cleveland.

* * *

THE BUSINESS WOMAN.

JULIA TRUITT BISHOP.

I HAVE somewhat to say about the business woman.

Let no one suppose that I mean the working woman.

The working woman never alludes to herself as a business woman. She is in the midst of the conflict, along with her brothers, and is busy with the one practical question: How to fill so many mouths with so little food. Work is not a plaything with her, and she has forgotten that there was ever any romance connected with it. But among all the curious outgrowths of this last quarter of the nineteenth century, the queerest is the business woman. She it is who makes a boast of herself. "Oh, yes, didn't you know I was in business?" she asks with the sweetness and the cunning little turn of the head; as though a canary had fluttered up to one end of his perch and had asked you to please note his little business-like air. For it is one of the peculiarities of the woman in business that she is tenfold more appealing and clinging and sweetly childlike than she ever was before she acquired the business craze. She

tries to make you feel how absurd it is for that dear little thing to be connected with anything practical, and at the same time she expects you to be astonished at the facility with which she does it.

As a general thing, the business woman is in easy circumstances, and there is not the slightest need for her to leave the shelter of her home. As a matter of fact, other women are starving for want of the work which she claims to be doing; yet she leaves her home and plays at working, just as children play at keeping house, and with about the same measure of success. You will notice that the business woman is never so well satisfied as when she has succeeded in capturing some variety of business that is usually carried on by men. It is her ambition to have an office of her own, or at least, an entire desk in somebody's office; and she carries her desk keys in a cunning little pocketbook, and consults her watch with the most delightful air as soon as she reaches the office, as though she wouldn't be a minute late for the world. Not that the time makes the slightest difference with her, though, for she comes one morning at nine, and the next at eleven, and the third morning she doesn't come at all, because she wants to look at those bargains Smith & Jones advertised. A man learns, early in his career, that punctuality is the soul of business; but the business woman was never known to have the slightest idea of the value of time; and if she was ever punctual it was by accident. Perhaps, on a day when no one called on her, and there was no one on whom she cared to call, and there were no bargains in the stores, and dinner was on time, and she felt like it, she might stroll in within half an hour of the appointed time; but unless all these contingencies happened to be favorable, she would be much more likely to come the next day or in a week or two. And then the little air of surprise with which she

listens to your reproaches! "What? Did you look for me? Oh, you know it sprinkled a little as I was about to start, and of course I couldn't afford to get my hat spoiled." Could anything be more conclusive than that? What are you that you should murmur. Apologize for your impatience and be thankful that she has come at all. When the business woman acquires possession of an office, one of her first investments is a copying book and letter-press. It would send a thrill to the soul of an anchorite to see her rush to the press with every letter, as soon as it is finished, and to note the charming air of exactness with which she places the letter in position, and how she twists her rosy lips as she twists the press! How delightful it all is, and what a change there is in the business world since charming creatures like this have invaded it! No wonder she writes letters there was never any need of writing, so she can copy them with that delicious press! True, her bookkeeping is not above suspicion, and after the first month she can't, for the life of her, tell what has become of all the money; but no doubt it's all right, and the money will turn up some of these days. In the meantime, there are the letters, all in the book, and what could be more delightful than that? How practical it is, and how methodical! And who cares for the old money, anyway?

But it is on "boards" and "committees" that the business woman shines to the best advantage. Then it is that she brings all her practical business experience into play to overawe the meeker sisterhood, who are mere tame, home-keeping women. Then it is that she dons her best costume (there is nothing like making a good impression, she says) and goes forth, bediamoned like an Indian begum, to ask business men for their hard-earned cash to help this or that pet charity. "We are out begging to-

day," she says merrily, with that playful, childlike smile of hers; "and we want you to give us a great big check for the Home for Friendless Young Women." And merchants and clerks and lawyers and messenger boys give into that jeweled hand, which does not, for its part, give up so much as the smallest of its diamonds for that most worthy cause. Of all the lessons she might have learned from contact with the business world, the business woman has learned but two, and they the most ignoble lessons of all. She knows how to make other people do the work for which she will get the credit, and she knows how to manage large charities with no personal outlay.

And to see the business woman, the woman who has dabbled with men's work until she feels that she is the Gladstone of her sex—to see her presiding over boards, or moving and seconding and rising to points of order—this, indeed, is a sight to move the laughter of gods and men. She has a little book on parliamentary law which she has "mastered" as she came down to the meeting on the cars; and she has a hazy idea that a new motion is something to be handed around like refreshments. She votes for motions which she has not heard, and after they have passed, reconsiders them with the most impartial air, and concludes that they won't do. There is really nothing that cannot be accomplished by the business woman, so long as she has a fair collection of parliamentary usages to juggle withal.

And what a patroness she makes—this business woman who likes to see her name in prominent places on boards of charity. It gives her a breezy feeling of activity and of splendid energy to occupy a niche while other people do the work; and there is about her an air of conscious magnanimity which could not be excelled if she were a public benefactor. She adopts an attitude of generous patron-

age toward old women in "homes" and children in asylums, and she gives the friendless young women in "homes" for their kind to understand that they may depend on her patronage as long as they behave themselves and show that they have sincerely repented. And if it might be said of her that she was ever the friend of her kind, then such might be forgiven her; but never, in all her "business" career, does she lift a finger to lighten the burden of any other woman. Her position, ridiculous as it is, gives her opportunities to help other women who are struggling against wind and tide; but she goes on her own frivolous way, and allows them to sink. Working girls come in her way, whom a little help or even a little sympathy, would save from the temptations that are crowding thick around them; but what are they that she should notice them? She feels her superiority to any mere working woman, and will have nothing to do with them, lest they should contaminate her socially. One must draw the line somewhere, she says, and draws the line at working girls, who are far beneath her. While they are mere working girls, struggling hard to make an honest living and to do right, the business woman has no feeling of sympathy for them; but when they once become friendless girls, then they come within the purview of one of the boards of which she is a member, and she will recollect that they are in the world. While they were merely poor and hard-working and tempted, they were nobody's business, but having fallen, and wrecked their lives, there is a "home" ready for them, and a long set of rules, and a matron to watch over them, and the business woman is kind enough to act on the board which fosters this lovely charity!

And this is the business woman of these latter days; unpunctual, inconsequent, making a plaything of business, and yet expecting from the world of men the utmost

respect for her business work, and the utmost courtesy for her womanhood. This is what men have been called to look upon and to deal with, and have been led to believe that this is a sample of what woman can do in the world of work. No wonder that men have said, in grave magazine articles and in ponderous lectures, that women have no capacity for business, and will never be successful in enterprises that require method and accuracy. It is such women as these who have done more harm in the cause of self-supporting womanhood than generations of faithful work will be able to overcome. And even with all this manifest absurdity, the business woman might be turned aside with a jest on the part of one sex, and with the silent disdain of the other, if it were not that she turns out work that is a travesty on the name, and then expects men to accept it and even to praise it because she is a woman. She has not learned the first lesson that was awaiting her in the business world, that there is no sex in work, and that no work deserves any consideration because of the worker. She enters a field where she must work side by side with men, and her work must be judged as mere work; and yet she has the temerity to expect that old-time chivalry will exempt her from criticism because she is a woman. Incompetent, trivial, unbusinesslike in every way, and yet claiming special privileges because of her sex! Half-doing a man's work and demanding all the courtesy due a woman; this is what has been visited upon this age of ours in the person of the woman who plays at business and amuses herself with a pretense of work.

SEXUAL SINS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.

Rev. Chas. Parkhurst has drawn down upon his devoted head the ire of the St. Louis *Mirror* by saying that one-half the husbands and wives of New York are unfaithful to their marriage vows. The *Mirror* remarks:

"There are more men true to their wives than are not. The unfaithful husbands are conspicuous. Not one-half the men, not one-tenth in any city are untrue to their wives. They have not the time for the most part. They have not the money, because that is a luxury that costs dearly. And above all they have not the inclination. . . . It is all bosh to say that unfaithfulness prevails among society women. They are as faithful as the wives of the poor. Their position would enforce faithfulness, if their moral sense did not. They are observed. American society women are unromantic. One might almost proclaim their virtue upon the poor ground that their blood is snow-broth. . . . The vast majority of men are not Priapians rampant. Only a man whose mind is a Tenderloin district and his soul an unclean "circus" can maintain that any appreciable number of married women in any station of life are sluts."

I dearly love a cheerful optimist—a man who can fix his gaze on a will-o'wisp, or glow-worm in the blackest midnight, and persuade himself and others that it is high noon—that the world is "dark with excess of bright." Sure, 'tis better to laugh than to be sighing—Democritus is preferable to Heraclitus. It is more pleasant to seek and commend virtue than to hurl anathemas at vice. Why, it may well be asked, should a man gaze into a cesspool when he may look at the stars? Why explore the foul sewers of a great city when he may sun himself

in its pleasant parks? So said the people of Paris, until disease and death reminded them that, however they might close their eyes thereto, there was an under as well as an upper world—that a sanitary officer is not necessarily a nuisance. If Bruneseau was called the most intrepid man in France for having explored and purified the Parisian cloacæ that the public health might be preserved, may not the man who seeks to edulcorate the moral Gemoniæ of America be entitled to equal honors?

The optimist is a good gift, for which we should be duly grateful. He is the brass band in the political torch-light procession, the hallelujah at the Methodist camp-meeting, the Weylerian press agent in Ahriman's war upon the powers of Darkness and the Devil. Overtaken by the deluge, he would not drown, but, like a champagne cork, bob serenely to the surface of that circumambient sea. Were old Sol to go out of business, he would proclaim it a blessing and prove it by sunstroke statistics—would insist that enough light and heat could be extracted from our stock of canned cucumbers to supply mankind until time shall be no more. The optimist points the small, the pessimist the large end of the telescope at the enemy. What one considers merely a sick house cat the other takes for a royal Bengal tiger; hence, while one is ever hopeful, the other is always sad at heart. Dr. Parkhurst sees too much and Mr. Reedy too little of the world's wickedness; due no doubt to a radical difference in age and temperament. Parkhurst's ravelled rope whiskers have grown grizzly in the unsavory but necessary occupation of moral night-soil man. The hypocrisy of his parishioners and the phallic revels of the redlight district have soured his soul and given him dyspepsia. It is quite natural, under the circumstances, that he should believe in original sin and doubt the perseverance of the saints. He mistakes

sociability for lewdness and a little harmless lallygagging for a *liasison*. He has come to the conclusion that the human race is rolling down hill to hell, and is trying to hold it back by the coat tails and making a brake of his boot heels. He cries aloud and spares not—has become the Jeremiah of his day and generation. The *Mirror* man is a rosy-cheeked youth, known to his *intimes* as Willie, and might be easily mistaken for the son or younger brother of W. J. Bryan. He looks at life through the rose-tinted glass of his study window and the mellow radiance of Arthurian romance. "To the pure all things are pure," and the Adonis of the Cyclone City has not yet fallen into the tigerish clutch of Venus Pandemos, or sunk beneath the brutalizing wand of Circe. He still believes that doctors find babes in hollow trees and peddle them about the streets in baskets. To him every man is St. Anthony, every woman a sacred mystery—the very habitues of Pine street are moving poems, celestial symphonies. To him the only wicked people in the world are those who reject the monetary wisdom of G. Cleveland for the financial heresy of Adam Smith, the economic omniscience of Mark Hanna for the maudlin idiocies of John Stuart Mill. It is a great pity that youth's sweet dream of innocence cannot last through life—that there comes a time when the shameful fact is driven home to e'en the most unwilling heart that the world is full of incontinent husbands and unfaithful wives.

We will find the truth anent American morals midway between Parkhurst's pessimistic croak and the *Mirror's* optimistic song. What proportion of married women "go wrong" no man can know; for this evil, like the iceberg, shows but little on the surface. Let any Lovelace of long experience, and formed to please a woman's fancy, but pause and reflect how few of those he knows to be unfaith-

ful wives are so regarded by the world. Women of professed respectability do not keep an assignation accompanied by a brass band, nor advertise their amours in the public prints. There are millions of wives who are, and well deserve to be, as far above suspicion as Cæsar's spouse; but could all the husbands in even the eminently virtuous St. Louis be wafted above the city like Don Cleofas, and look with magic vision through every roof and wall, the divorce courts and funeral directors would experience a business boom. It may be true, as the *Mirror* urges, that society women are faithful as poor men's wives. The great middle class is and has ever been the chief repository of the nation's virtue. A century or so ago, when the mass of the American people led useful and laborious lives, were permeated with a true religious spirit and enjoyed homely plenty, there were few *nymphs du pave*, and even a Hester Prynne was regarded with almost universal horror. Healthful toil and frugal fare are virtue's guardian angels. They exorcise the demon Asmodeus and evolve a rugged and continent race; but such grinding penury as millions feel in our modern cities "freezes the genial current of the soul" and blunts the moral sensibilities. Not necessity alone, but ignorance and evil environment, make panders of men and wantons of women. Solomon assures us that "Pride goeth before destruction"; but I say unto you that when pride is crushed out of man or woman by a load of rags and wretchedness, damnation is even at the door. Pride is the sheet-anchor of morality, the dynamics of noble deeds. When love fails and hope flies, pride still lingers, the savage rearguard of a human soul, and dies in the last ditch. Solomon was an ass. Think of the millions of kingly men who but for the power of pride would to-day be driveling drunkards—of the women pure as the flowers that bloom above the green glacier, who

else were wantons! For legions in every land pride stands with drawn sword between appetite and infamy, between desire and dishonor. But I shall not quarrel with the shade of Solomon. By an heroic effort, and an occasional lift from the Lord, he was able to remain reasonably faithful to one thousand women of all colors and kinds, albeit we learn from the Canticles that he was particularly partial to coons. I infer from this that he was a republican in politics. While penning his brief essay on pride, he may have been distracted by the arrival of a fresh consignment of wives from the Congo country, or the report of his seneschal that some neighboring monarch had plundered his smoke-houses during the night. Despite Bro. Parkhurst's tearful complaints, I opine that the average New York hubby would not stray far from his own fireside were it a duplicate of Solomon's, and we could scarce expect the average man to be either wiser or better than Israel's consecrated king.

While poverty assails virtue on one side with the plea of necessity, luxury attacks it on the other by inflaming the passions. The female favorites of fortune usually belong to the Cyrenaic sect—consider pleasure the greatest good. That their blood is not "snow-broth" is evidenced by the many scandals, which, despite all efforts at repression, find publicity. They are of the same blood and bone as their sisters in humbler walks of life, are better fed and groomed, have more leisure—and "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." If they be "unromantic," as the *Mirror* says, so much the worse, for unromantic people are ever animalistic. Marius and Cosette may dream away a hundred sensuous summer nights hidden in the boskage, satisfied with their own fond imaginings; but rob them of the halo of romance, destroy the airy Nepheloccygia in which they live and love, and there's naught

left but a solfatara of lust. Romance is not alone the corolla of love; it is the very incense of virtue. So long as it envelops man and woman, they wander far above the crass animalism of the world. Banish it, and you either abolish sex or reduce the commingling of men and women to the level of brute beasts. Society women are "observed" more than others, 'tis true, for to be seen of men and envied of women seems to be the chief object of their existence; but it is likewise true that they are by custom allowed a larger liberty than are the wives of workingmen. Not even the French matron is so free to flirt with gentle-husband, as our fair devotee of fashion. Hubby grubs away at money-getting and sends her to the mountains or seaside for the summer to enjoy herself—and any kind of weather would indeed be dreary to the average society dame if she could not have a gallant or two traipsing at her heels. The society woman is indeed "observed." She is observed boating, bathing, bikeing and strolling in leafy dells on moonless nights with noted "mashers," while her hubby is worrying through the summer in a distant city. She is observed at the opera, while her matrimonial mate is soaking his bunions at home—taking lunch with her escort afterwards; disporting herself at balls until late hours, then carried home in a closed carriage much the worse for wine. And the more she is observed, the more suggestive becomes the lament of the despoiled Lucrece:

"O Opportunity, thy guilt is great!
Thou makest the vestal violate her oath.
Thou blow'st th fire when temperance is thaw'd:
Thou smother'st honesty, thou murder'st troth;
Thou foul abettor! thou notorious bawd!
In thy shady cell, where none may spy him,
Sits Sin, to seize the souls that wander by him."

The morals of *le beau monde* is frightfully low, else we would not find in every city women notoriously corrupt as Sycorax, moving in the "best society." Money covers a multitude of sins, and the woman of great wealth may have as many lovers as she likes without impairing her social position—so long as her husband doesn't "raise a roar." Even a divorce "for cause," and opera bouffe duel among her admirers afterwards, does not always succeed in driving her from the sanctum sanctorum of swelldom. Nay, such a trifling *contretemps* is apt to increase her popularity in "polite society"—on the principle, I presume, that "like takes to like." Let a seamstress be so much as suspected of a *liaison* and she's branded as a slut by her "set" and "guyed" on the street by gamins; but the debaucheries of a female Astor, or the foul leavings of a he-Vanderbilt, are considered as things almost sacred. These slimy lepidosauria have mounted so high on steps of gold that they are worshipped as were those obscene gods who made lechery a virtue and drunkenness divine. There are doubtless good women in the fashionable world; but, like old Dog Tray, they are caught in very suspicious company.

Taken all in all, the American people are the purest found on this planet. Our poor have not yet become so degraded as those of Europe, nor have our rich descended to the unspeakable abominations which have so long disgraced the "hupper suckles" of old England. The *Mirror's* assertion that American husbands have not time to be unfaithful, will strike the average reader as very funny; but the fact is that of all men they are the busiest, and it is the drones, the "gentlemen of elegant leisure" who are most addicted to debauchery. Even our great millionaires are deeply engrossed in business, grasping right and left for a few more grains of gold. Wealth, not

women, is the dominant passion of the sons of Uncle Sam; still, they are human—" abounding in pleasant faults "—and not much addicted to overdoing the part of Adonis. The idea of the *Mirror* that American husbands are continent because " they have not the money " to be otherwise, must be dismissed as the merest moonshine. The money expended by these same men every year for cigars and liquors alone would deck every bawd with diamonds. The wealth-producing power of the American is the wonder of the world; but he is no miser. He values money only because of the pleasure it brings. He is the spendthrift *par excellence* of the universe. Yet despite this fact the path of the average prostitute lies through the vale of Poverty and ends at the potter's field. " The weariness that lies awake for hire " has little attraction for the average American husband. It is " the hell of a fellow " and the foul-mouthed hoodlum, the precocious " kid " and the besotted bum who support the bagnio. The wife who is " led astray " invariably supplied the string; but she is usually sufficiently exacting in her tastes to make the male frequenter of Boiler avenue innocuous in society. A good woman, refined enough to be modest and sensible enough to be discreet, may travel this land alone, safe from insult, for nowhere else in the world have men so high respect for a noble woman. The very ditches and delvers are her knights-errant, and woe betide the brute who would deflower her by force, or that gallant who gets prematurely " gay." But high as my opinion is of American husbands, I confess that their virtue is of that kind which " rejoices in temptation." I go surety for no man assailed by the cestus. Despite long centuries of civilization and the lessons of religion, man is still a savage—the moral law has not yet reduced his animalism to subjection. I suspect that if any large proportion of benedicts are

faithful it is not altogether their fault. The gentle reader will please bear in mind that I am in nowise responsible for the frailties of my fellowman—my duty's done when I set him a good example. I did not make the bipedal brute, else had less mud been employed in his manufacture. I heartily approve of the late Bill Nye's reflections on the "rewey"; but am dreadfully afraid the "single standard of morals" will long remain an iridescent dream. Thus far its chief agitators have been people well past their grand climacteric, busy old maids and envious eunuchs. It is well to ever bear in mind that man is by nature a Mormon.

* * *

THE MODERN SPHINX.

AN ŒDIPUS WANTED—APPLY EARLY.

"We are beset with problems. The characteristic symbol of the age is the question mark. Our patron saint is the sphinx."

These be not the words of "Vocal Willie," "Pitchfork Tilman" or "Anarchist Altgeld"; but the line with which Rev. Geo. Hodges, dean of the Theological School, Cambridge, opens a series of profound lectures on the tendencies of the times. I have not read all the dean's discourses; but the statement made by a careful reviewer that he "disavows any intention of speaking with authority" on these intricate questions, makes me eager to do so. I always feel ill at ease in the presence of Omniscience—long to sneak out and commune with mere mortals who are not altogether infallible. That is why I avoid those reformers who know it all, the purveyors of panaceas—those who propose to remodel our entire social system

and drag the industrial millennium in by the ears. I am a purblind crepuscular animal, and cannot stand the glare of that great white light which beats upon the thrones of those sociological demi-gods who consider a rejuvenescence of the Golden Age,

> "A warke it ys as easie to be doone
> As tys to saye, Jacke! robys on."

I have noticed that the closer a man examines those complex social questions with which we are confronted, that the more brain power he brings to bear upon them the less inclined he is speak *ex-cathedra*. It is usually the fellows who absorb their information from the prescription department of a political party, and the feculent vomitings of a partisan press, who are most eager to relieve the Almighty of his occupation and assume control of the universe. These are the Magi who point the way from the dark valley of Doubt to the sunny mountains of Certitude to men who have labored long and earnestly to familiarize themselves with every phase of the social contract; who have striven with all their strength to trace each effort to its efficient cause. To the ne'er-do-well, the street-corner psilogist and other empty gab-traps and chronic failures it is easy enough to say, "Physician, heal thyself"; but there is another class well nigh as noisy and equally ignorant, with which it is more difficult to deal. I refer to those who have accumulated more or less cash by trading in tape and tripe, selling soap or sad-irons, harvesting hoop-poles or planting hogs, loaning money at usurious interest or sitting on their hunkers while others built towns and cities around their realty holdings. Having managed to keep the skin of their bellies from flapping around their backbones like a wet dish-clout about a wire clothes-line, they imagine themselves filled to the muzzle

with monetary wisdom—assume to speak authoritatively on subjects anent which they know as little as any other breed of gibbering parrots who have managed to get their beaks into the almond-box. In one respect at least, I am like the Lord—being no respecter of persons; hence even the studious and painstaking economists need not hope to escape criticism. They are too much addicted to saving the world by the science of definition—resembling those who "by geometric scale do take measure of pots of ale." They give us long disquisitions on the "law of rent," the "law of interest," the "origin and use of money," etc.; all of which is very curious and entertaining for those who have time for it, but is emphatically that philosophy which bakes no bread. When first informed of the existence of the "law of interest," the world must have felt much as did Moliere's M. Jourdain, who was surprised to learn from his professors of languages that he "had been talking prose all his life without knowing it." Taking the social machine apart simply to name its component parts were much like analyzing an apple that the schoolboy may know what he is eating. What the latter wants is to have pointed out to him the path to the orchard that he fill his "pod" with fall pippins. The people ask for dumplings and are given an essay on digestion. "Knowledge is power," say the old copy-books; but that depends. The knowledge that labor is the creator of all wealth has enabled no slave of toil to help himself out of the hole. When Tennyson said that "knowledge comes but wisdom lingers," he must have been contemplating the economic metaphysicians. But perhaps I do the professors or political economy an injustice. When a man of mediocre mind is seized with a fervent desire to know God he joins church, "gets religion," becomes a phrenetic defender of some foolish faith, and is ready to persecute

those who hold other opinions; but the wise man is not so easily satisfied. He explores the history and weighs the evidences of all religions; then, instead of saying, "Here is God," seizing a bullwhip and driving his brethren to the Throne of Grace, he tells us how this or the other religious customs arose and what effect it has had upon the human race. This is eminently unsatisfactry; but shall we blame him because despite his persistent research, he has nothing better to offer? It is easy enough for the sciolist to be a partisan—to profess that faith which "removes mountains"—pitching them headlong into the fertile plain, foolishly enough, we think. The ignorant man finds no difficulty in taking Davy Crockett's advice. He is ever sure he's right, always ready to go ahead; but for the man of clear, analytical mind, who insists upon examining both sides of the shield before so much as hazarding an opinion that it is a shield and not some cunning pasteboard imitation thereof, it may be quite a different matter. Perhaps in dealing with social problems we can do no other than "go it blind" and trust to Providence. A clown in Hamlet's place would have quickly determined where lay his duty and done it. Of course he would, in all human probability, have done the wrong thing in the right place; but "the native hue of resolution" would not have been "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought" and lost the name of action. While the economic Hamlets soliloquize, the people pin their faith to the patent medicines hawked with so much lung power by this or the other coterie of place-hunters. All things considered, it is not so much wonder they often go wrong as that they ever get right.

Dean Hodge's remark that "Our Patron Saint is the Sphinx," must be condemned as a metaphorical miscarriage; still we may easily divine his meaning. The Texas

editor who alluded to the flight of a disreputable character from the community as having "filled a long-felt want" succeeded in making himself understood, which is more than can be said for some of our grammar-sharps. The Sphinx which proposed a riddle to the Thebans and slaughtered such as failed to return a correct answer, could scarce be called a Patron Saint—unless, indeed, the fool-killer be so considered; still she may be taken as truly representative of the condition which confronts us to-day. The Sphinx of Time is propounding to this nation a riddle which it must solve, and that soon, else be destroyed. And up to this time no Œdipus has arisen, or seems likely to arise, whose wisdom will stand between us and destruction. Nay, should he appear upon the scene, how could the Sphinx hear him, deafened as she is by the persistent clamor of the Jack Cades and Cagliostros—each perched on some political platform or foolish editorial tripod, and playing at Liberty enlightening the world—by the aid of gas? If I might presume to drop a few words of advice into this polemical chaos, like sperm oil on the waves of a tempestuous ocean, I would say: Keep cool. Remember that no political party has a corner on the patriotism and intellect of the universe. Even a Democrat is not first cousin to the Demiurgus, nor a Republican necessarily an ass—however impossible the latter proposition may appear to the careful students of cause and effect. We must first free ourselves from partisan prejudices if we would hope to deal wisely and well with vexatious social problems. What can we expect from a party platform built expressly to please either the plutocrat or the *fœx populi?*—of a Congress which makes no secret that it is governed altogether by "party expediency"—is not considering the general welfare, but playing a game of political chess—with the public fleshpots for pawns? It

has been said, and truly so, that "in a multitude of counsel there is wisdom"; but the American people do not come together in council, do not deliberate calmly. Each grabs a parcel of made-to-order "opinions" and attempts to shove it bodily down the throat of his brother. If he declines to gulp it down like a hound-pup feasting on hot pancakes, he's either a "peon of the money power" or a "repudiator," a "parasite" or a "popocrat." That is what we are pleased to call a "campaign of education"—that's the "multitude of counsel" from whose cumulative brain-power we expect to see emanate a full grown Minerva. Lincoln's remark to the effect that "you can't fool all the people all the time," has puffed us up with our own importance. Lincoln was right; you cannot fool them all the time—you cannot so much as persuade the half of 'em to apply the soft pedal to themselves and give you a hearing—unless you consent to hoot the jejune hoots that tickle the untrained ears of the majority. Fool them! You might as well try your sophistry on a stampede of buffalo bulls—which stick tail in the air, shut eyes and run over you, bringing up in a fat pasture or at the bottom of a precipice, as it may happen. Impartial consideration of any economic thesis whatsoever is out of the question for the simple reason that each individual assumes to know it all—insists on teaching instead of being taught. Government is simply a vast coöperative concern in which all are interested. If the stockholders in any private enterprise, however great, divided into warring factions and fought for its employments without regard to fitness; if they made a pickleherring or ninnyhammer general manager, and in their councils each opposed a business proposition for the simple reason that it did not originate with his office-seeking set, the corporation would quickly become bankrupt. That government is able to meet its

bills is due to the fact that it is an assessment concern—is empowered to make its stockholders foot the losses occasioned by their own egregious folly. Like the horse-leech's daughters, its continual cry is "more!" and it saps the very life blood of labor. Instead of earnest, dignified discussions, such as distinguishes the directors of a bank or other business, we hold political scalp-dances—and it is bankrupting us to pay the piper. Imagine the board of control of a great department store determining a business policy by means of a brass-band and torch-light procession! Yet that is the way in which this nation, the greatest corporation on earth, decides economic propositions. It might be well to blow less brass and employ more brains.

We are indeed "beset with problems"; but by far the most important—one which may be said to embrace all others—is simply this: How can we secure a more equitable division between labor and capital of the annual increment of wealth, and assure to every able-bodied individual in this land an opportunity to earn an honest living? This is a problem that is pressing upon us with ever increasing power. It is the riddle which the modern Sphinx propounds to the American Thebes, and woe betide us if we blunder in our answer! Upon its proper solution depends not only peace and the perpetuity of representative government, but perhaps our very civilization itself. I am well aware that many well-fed people consider it a crime to call attention to this fact; even deny the proposition altogether, brand it as "sensationalism"—shove their heads into the sand, and leave their tail-feathers temptingly exposed to the fury of the coming cyclone. The French aristocrats declined to acknowledge the approach of the Revolution; but unfortunately, you can't snub an earthquake nor induce an active buzz-

saw to wait for an introduction. There be people who curse the weather clerk for predicting storms instead of halcyon days, forgetting that but for his watchfulness picnic millinery might get wet and proud ships be cast away. It were foolish to shoot the sentinel for sounding an alarm on the approach of the enemy instead of making the welkin ring with the criminal cry of "All is well." It were best that we should all be honest with ourselves—that those people who live on "Easy Street" occasionally look elsewhere than into their own well-furnished back parlors—to open their ears and consider well whether the hoarse rumbling be but the car rattling o'er the stony street or the cannon's opening roar. Labor being the Atlas upholding our world, it were the part of wisdom to inquire from time to time how he comes on with his contract—especially when he complains audibly that his burden is too grievous to be borne, manifests a disposition to take his pack for a football and play a game scarce relished by the grandstand.

I have no incentive to magnify the danger with which this nation is confronted. I have never been a candidate for office, nor had a governmental ax to grind. As an employer I am not especially interested in the advancement of wages to the curtailment of my profits. Readers of and advertisers in magazines usually belong to what is known as the "conservative class"—those who strenuously object to anything savoring of "agitation," who agree with Pope that "whatever is is right." Still I cannot see that aught is to be gained—while certainly much may be lost—by self-deception. An agitator is not necessarily a public enemy; else must we denounce the Conscript Fathers, condemn the labors of Luther and approve the crucifixion of Christ. Only through agitation is progress possible. It is the law of life. Without it the seas would

become mighty pools of putrescence. A prominent pulpiteer recently delivered himself as follows:

The laborer should be content in that sphere where God has placed him. His condition is better than ever before. It has greatly improved during the last 100 years. But for the Bryans and Tillmans and Debs, he would be docile enough.

These have long been the platitudes of Dives. If true, it is only necessary to execute the Bryans and Tillmans and Debses as fast as they appear and snap our fingers in the face of the Sphinx. But they are not true. It is rank blasphemy to assume that God is responsible for the hunger and wretchedness existing in a land capable of supporting in comfort, even in luxury, five times its present population. It is not true that the condition of labor "is better than ever before," or that "it has greatly improved during the last one hundred years." I brand that statement, which comes so trippingly to the lips of the apostles of *laissez faire*, as a foolish falsehood. The past century has transformed the workman from a sovereign into a slave. Then he need ask no man's permission to provide himself with food and raiment; now he must lay down his tools and starve at the beck of a boss. He can, when permitted to employ his strength and skill in the production of wealth, enjoy many comforts denied his grandsire—comforts of his own creation; but who would not prefer independence with homely plenty well assured, to the constant fear of being transformed into a pitiful tramp and compelled to beg his bread? Who would not rather be lord of his own life than the trembling creature of another? The condition of labor has not "greatly improved during the last hundred years" even for those whose souls are formed for servitude instead of

sovereignty. The addition of the word "tramp" to our vocabulary is itself suggestive. A century ago—before the condition of labor had so "greatly improved"—such industrial vagabondage was unknown. Men did not then commit offenses against the law for the express purpose of securing shelter from the cold behind the walls of a calaboose and being fed on prison fare. I do not want to see the workingman rendered too "docile," for docility is the nature of the lap-dog. When it becomes the distinguishing characteristic of the Caucasian, he will begin supplying the African "coon" with livered lackeys. How comes it that docility is demanded of men who have twice played Samson to Britain's royal beast—who in a single century have made this the wealthiest nation in the world? "Docile?" I like your impudence! To whom, forsooth, should the giant "bend the pregnant hinges of the knee"? To whom shall Labor—having filled the land with fatness over which it stands guard with the sword of Gideon—humbly apply for the privilege of existing upon the earth?

The condition of the laborer should have "greatly improved during the last hundred years," for his productive power has multiplied. It is estimated that the average wealth-creating power of the individual has more than quadrupled since the adoption of the Constitution. Has the reward of the workman increased in equal ratio? If not, there's something radically wrong with our industrial system, and the man who does not seek earnestly to discover and remove the evil is in league with the Devil, I care not how earnestly he prays to the Lord. The minister who prostitutes religion in the interest of proscriptive right entrenched behind a system of brutal wrong, is an infernal hypocrite who should be plunged fathoms deep in hell. There is not a man capable of successfully passing a *lunatico-inquirendo* but knows full well that the reward

of the worker has not kept pace with the wonderful enhancement of his productive power, and it is this universally recognized fact which constitutes our chief danger to-day—is the riddle which we are called upon to read.

Let us take a cursory glance at existing conditions; not from the standpoint of plutocrat or pauper, employer or employe, but from that of the patriot eager to promote his country's honor—to steer the nation clear of those rocks upon which so many proud empires that imagined themselves immortal have been hopelessly wrecked. According to a special report made by Carroll D. Wright of the U. S. Census Bureau, there were 22,735,661 persons employed in gainful occupations in 1890, of whom 3,523,730 were unemployed for three months or more, and 1,139,672 during the entire year. Those 22,735,661 people create all our wealth—clothe, feed and house the nation; hence each must provide for approximately three people. This means that during at least three months of the year 1890, more than ten and one-half million Americans were deprived of the usufruct of industry, more than three and a half million during the entire twelve months. And all authorities unite in calling 1890 "a normal industrial period"! It is estimated by competent authority that during 1893 and six months of 1896 the number of unemployed was fully double the foregoing figures—that seven million wealth producers were idle and more than twenty-one million Americans deprived of the fruits of industry, their legitimate support! Yet we are told that if the Bryans, Altgelds and Debses could be suppressed, all would be well—that this grand army of unfortunates would continue to suffer in silence and with lamb-like docility; that the Deity would be delighted and Dives in no danger! Robespierre was the creature, not the creator, of the Revolution. And what is the reward of those so fortunate as

to have employment? This is a gold-standard, high-wage country, the Paradise of working people, the Utopia where the condition of labor so "greatly improved during the past one hundred years"; hence we may expect to find every employed workman fairly wallowing in wealth, lolling during his hours of leisure in sybaritic luxury. In 1890—a good year, and before that tremendous slump in wages from which the country has not yet recovered—the American manufacturing industries employed on an average 4,050,785 operatives (exclusive of officers and clerks) and paid them $1,799,671,492. If we figure 300 working days to the year, we have for the finest skilled and most productive labor in the world an average reward of $1.48; but as 313 days constitute the working year of such shops as shut down on Sunday, while many run the entire 365, we may safely assume that the average earnings of four million American operatives during a "normal year" does not exceed a dollar a day. Debs declared some months ago that thousands of men, recognized as good operatives, were then working in American mills for 50 cents a day; and as the statement has never been disputed, even by those who proclaim him a *gibier de potence*, or at least a dangerous demagogue, I take it that the assertion was literally true. When we deduct for time lost through sickness and lockouts, we may readily see what chance even the skilled laborer has for his life in this land of "Liberty, Fraternity and Equality." Yet we read in ponderous essays—penned by this or the other possessor of "fair round belly with good capon lined"—that if he would practice economy and leave the wretched agitators alone, he might get rich as grease!—that in this blessed land every deserving man has an opportunity to become a plutocrat, perchance president! The hundred or so boys actually born stark naked in log cabins half a century or more ago—when the

world was much nearer industrial equality—and who have been cast to the surface of the ever-restless political sea, struck oil, married a competence, wrecked a railroad, swindled an orphan or stolen a valuable idea from a confiding inventor, are offered in evidence. Think of preaching economy to a man who is striving to pay house-rent, feed and clothe a family on $5 a week—and half the time out of work!—of telling the wretch who toils for 50 cents *per diem* that he should "live well within his means and lay up something for a rainy day!" I sometimes wonder that the workingman doesn't grow weary of being hectored by these wooden-heads and shut off their wind. We have entirely too many silk-stocking theorists dabbling with this labor problem—men who never trained with the tin-bucket brigade, who know not what it is to tramp from boss to boss, asking the privilege of earning his bread. No man is competent to speak for American labor who has never regarded "the primal eldest curse" as a gracious gift of God—who has never been denied the poor privilege of eating bread in the sweat of his brow. Here in the West and South, as in all new countries—where man produces in a more primeval manner, giving little of his produce to capital—labor retains something of its old-time dignity and receives a better reward; but the foregoing is a true pen-picture of the condition of a vast majority of those Americans who work for wages.

With so large a contingent hovering ever on the verge of starvation's hell, and the farmers sympathizing openly with the strikers who defy the laws, wreck property and destroy life, were it not well to treat the sphinx seriously and cast about earnestly for an answer? It is customary to rely upon general education as the preservative power *par excellence;* so we proceed to fill mens' heads with a clear conception of their power and their hearts with ambi-

tion, then expect them to be patient on empty bellies—to remain "docile" under the fire-whips of want while idleness ostentatiously wastes. By public education we continually increase the furnace fires; by making the battle of labor more bitter we augment the weight on the safety valve, then calmly assume that we have made explosion impossible! Only an ignorant people, like those of Mexico, India or Persia, will patiently suffer the pangs of abject poverty in the midst of plenty. Our public school system is the sulphur, our hard industrial conditions the niter, of that social gun-powder to which the ostentation of our multi-millionaires is applying the match. Suppose that the "era of progress and prosperity" promised by the Republicans should fail to materialize, and 1897 be an exacerbation of 1893: Could we depend on the "docility" of more than seven million idle and desperate wage-workers —the farmers meanwhile asserting that they would burst no blood vessels hurrying to the defense of Dives? Suppose that Debs is supplanted by a Danton in our Faubourg St. Antoine, that a Little Corporal succeeds Coxey? Of course I will be called an "alarmist"—such was the fate of John the Baptist, who declared that the baptism of water would be followed by one of fire. It was the fate of those who advised the rantankerous abolitionists that they were forcing this nation into a civil war that would cost more treasure, blood and tears than all the d——n niggers from Ham to Ida Wells were worth; of those who told the impudent French aristocrats that they were dancing on a mine of dynamite which would assuredly slam them against the shrinking face of the silver moon. It is the goose-gabble which offends the ear of every man who sees a little further into the future than does the eminently "conservative" jackassicus who goes about with his eyes shut, proclaiming that there can be no upheaval of the

nether fires so long as he is here to keep the universe in order. I trust that every industrial promise made by our friends the enemy will be fulfilled; but we must not suffer ourselves to be misled by temporary spasms of prosperity into the belief that the Sphinx has winged her way elsewhere. She has propounded her fateful problem, announced the penalty, and while she may be soothed to slumber for a time by a periodical business revival, sooner or later she will enforce her edict.

How can we secure a more equitable division between labor and capital of the annual increment of wealth, and assure to every able-bodied individual in this land an opportunity to earn an honest living?

That is the most important problem submitted to the arbitrament of human wisdom since the beginning of the world. It is a mighty interrogation point thrown up by human progress, and cannot be answered from the musty tome of precedent, for in all history present industrial conditions have no parallel. Solve it, and pauperism will practically disappear. The giant specter of crime will shrink as did the fisherman's genie of the flask, for necessity will not goad the one nor pride tempt the other to defy the laws of man and mock the will of God. Half the burden of human misery will disappear like a miasmic mist before the beams of morning, the waters of Bimini renew the youth of those aged and broken before their time, and smiles shine with a eclestial radiance on faces now wet with tears. Why should it not be so? Are we, the wisest of God's creatures, too dull to utilize to the utmost his gracious gifts. Must the fertile fields lie fallow, the fecund mines untouched beneath our feet, the tall timber stand, the cattle remain unsold, the sheep unshorn and the fish uncaught, while millions of men with hearts of oak and muscles of iron remain idle and see Want and Wretched-

ness stalk like grisly phantoms through the world—laughing perhaps at ponderous lectures on the evils of overproduction?" Have we not wisdom and honesty enough to work together and fairly divide the joint product at the end of the day? Does God create only fools and knaves? "Come, let us reason together."

No, I shall not presume to take the initiative—to tell the world exactly what it must do to be saved. "I am Davus not Œdipus." I suggest, however, that we leave all our pet panaceas to the janitor for safe-keeping, or hang them on the hat rack before entering the hall. We have had all kinds of tariffs and all manner of moneys, but the Sphinx remains minatory. We have heard considerable from the gentleman who would abolish interest; but while the government may accord me the free use of its "rascal counters," my neighbor will not allow me the use of his property, without hope of reward, and that is really what I want. The man who is going to redeem the world industrial by a "powerful Christian awakening"—an universal altruism—has long been abroad in the land; but I have not yet noted that Christianity, howsoever much awake, induces a man to tender me the big end in a horse-trade. Coöperation, so-called, has proven a *château en Espagne*, while communism places the industrial giant and the scurvy pigmy on a parity. Doubtless something may be accomplished by wise tariff and monetary legislation, warfare on monopolies of this or the other article, and regulation of common carriers, while a religious revival that will give us a clearer conception of *meum et tuum* were not to be despised; yet these do

> —"but skin and film the ulcerous place,
> While rank corruption, mining all within,
> Infects unseen."

They do not reach the root of the trouble, which is simply this: Labor, broadly speaking, can no longer produce without the coöperation of large capital, and to secure such coöperation it must yield whatsoever proportion of the product capital has the impudence to ask. The natural order is reversed in our industrial world to-day—the creature hath become lord of its creator. It may be the inevitable penalty of that differentiation of effort and consequent increase in productive power which we call progress; but if so, we must sorrowfully admit to the Sphinx our inability to answer. The temptation to launch forth into a long—and perhaps unprofitable—lecture at this point is nipped in the bud by the inelasticity of our column rules; but at the risk of creating a stampede—if not indeed a riot—I suggest that we all procure the complete works of Henry George and give them not only a careful but an unprejudiced perusal. I do not premise that he has discovered the alkahest of the ancient alchemists or has the philosopher's stone concealed about his person; but a man who has devoted a score of years to the patient study of this problem should be accorded a patient hearing—especially by those wise-acres who, to save their immortal souls, could not so much as name half a dozen standard economic authors. He is entitled to a hearing if on no other ground than that he is the only man of superior mind who has had the moral courage to really face the problem. Whatever may be said of his economic theorem, the fact remains that he is the most powerful logician in the world to-day. He is to polemics what Ingersoll is to oratory. He has unhorsed all his critics and trampled them into the subsoil—despite the axiom that "thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just." His paramount position is alarming to people bred to our way of thinking; but no more so than was that of the

supreme court of Vermont, which, at the beginning of this century, refused to surrender a fugitive slave "unless the master would show a bill of sale from the Almighty." At that time the people of every section denounced the decision as anarchical and infamous; to-day the slaveholders themselves admit the justice of the degree. Every proposition that is new is necessarily strange, and quite apt to excite the ridicule or disgust of those whose mentality flows along time-worn ruts. It required five centuries for the Christian faith to secure a firm foothold, so eminently "conservative" were our idol-worshipping ancestors! As the wise men of the various political sanhedrins and ecumenical councils have signally failed to unravel the industrial riddle, it might not be amiss to call the Napoleon of economic controversy into court and consider whether he be the Œdipus raised up by Providence to knock the threatening Sphinx off her perch. At least we should hear before condemning him—if only to escape the withering scorn of Byron, who declares that "The man who will not reason is a bigot, and the man who dares not is a slave."

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EDITORIAL ETCHINGS.

The Duke of Marlborough recently expended 100,000 Vanderbiltian dollars getting his wife acquainted with the Prince of Wales—the most notorious bawd-master in Great Britain, a creature so infernally foul that if he do but bow to a pretty woman her reputation is forever blighted, her name a by-word in every London bagnio. In a third of a century this modern satyr, this retchy Falstaff renaissance or quintessential extract of royal feculence, has squandered $50,000,000 in riotous living; or

rather he has wasted the $30,000,000 foolishly given him by the hard-working people, and owes the balance to shopkeepers and capitalists who dared not refuse credit to the professional beat lest he exert his pull as heir-apparent to force them into bankruptcy. This vast amount does not include the considerable sums which he has gotten by sure-thing gambling with prigs who lacked the nerve to beat his face for dealing from the bottom of the deck, nor the fat fees extracted from ambitious parvenues as the price of his social patronage. How large a "loan" he secured at Blenheim Palace no one can say, but he probably pulled Consuelo's leg for fifty thousand cold. Anybody may have the "distinguished honor" of entertaining this royal scab, this political pustule, this social chancre, if prepared to pay his price, then permit him to name the "ladies" of the party and transform the house of his host into a den of drunkenness and temple of harlotry. The Prince of Wales should be chosen as high priest of those unclean Armenian Yescedees whose occupation is robbery, whose god is the devil, and whose religious rite is the phallic revel. A peculiar feature of the Blenheim festivities—or debauch—was the manner in which the Vanderbilt purchase treated the reporters of the daily press, sent thither to slobber over everything in sight. He peremptorily refused them permission to approach his dukely person, and issued orders that they must tog themselves out in the livery of lackeys before setting foot within the sacred precincts of Blenheim Palace, or so much as entering the park! As may have been hitherto suspected, I am not in the habit of throwing jasmine buds and magnolia blooms at the Texas press; but to their credit be it said, that had this pug-nosed spawn of old Sarah Jennings issued such an insulting order to a crowd of Texas reporters, they would have either made him crawl

stark-naked on his hands and knees down hill, or shot the sawdust out of him before the sun went down. But considering the class of newspaper cattle with which he had to deal, I am inclined to approve the sarto-reportorial regulations of the Duke. He manifested a correct conception of the eternal fitness of things in relegating to the social level of the lackey all representatives of the Jenkinesque school of journalism. Realizing that the reporters were there to fawn and grind out columns of high-falutin flubdub, he very properly insisted that they herd with the other menials and clothe themselves in keeping with their caste. Furthermore, a couple of hundred obsequious pencil-pushers in the livery of lackeys added picturesqueness to the park, didn't cost its owner a penny and impressed the Prince with his host's importance. It was a good idea in more ways than one. While the reporters were acquiring the profesional genuflexions of flunkeydom —learning to play mumble-peg or wipe their proboscides on the carpet without bending their backs or losing their balance—they were likely to forget the damning disgrace brought upon the Churchill family by that of its guest of honor—to overlook the *liaison* of "Lady" Churchill and Prince Collars-and-Cuffs. While practicing the ligneous pose of Jeames de la Pluche, they could scarce be expected to remember that their master was descended from England's most notorious cut-purse and pander, who acquired position by prostituting his sister to another Prince of Wales and secured wealth by picking the pockets of dead soldiers—would probably not pause to consider whether the head of the Churchill family had another female relative who could be bartered for royal favor. While becoming accustomed to their new clothes—delighted at the opportunity to appear in livery—they might not even remember that the Jook was the son of a cowardly

wife-beater and had traded his title—bought with his great grand-aunt's bawdry—to American parvenues for the boodle he was blowing in with such reckless abandon. Verily this little sprig of British nobility is not such an ass as he looks—his bullet-head is actually capable of evolving ideas. The press has long posed as "the Fourth Estate," proclaimed its power to make and unmake empires; yet here we see it dancing attendance on a powerless princeling and decadent dukeling and considering it a blessed privilege! O tempora! O Mores! O Hades! A correspondent wants to know "what Greely or the elder Bennett would have said." I can guess what Greely would have said; but as all society debutantes read the ICONOCLAST, perhaps my correspondent had best send postage for sealed reply. It would sound very much like the favorite explanation with which Lieut.-Col. Rienzi Miltiades Johnsing, of Houston, is wont to rinse his mouth when browsing around in that murky border-land which separates the "jag" from the "load." Now that the titled descendant of an obsequious door-hold and a shameless procureur has decided that a reporter of "social functions" is but a lackey (a word of German origin and the equivalent of lick) we may expect the idea to be adopted by our Anglo-maniacs. It need not surprise us should Josef Phewlitzer, Henri Watterson and A. H. Belo blossom out at any time in velvet coats and scorched banana knee breeches. By all means let the "social function" editor wear livery, that the world may recognize at a glance the parasite of the parvenu, the ectozoon that feeds on the avatar of idiocy.

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MR. BRANN: Nine American states, with a population of more than 38 millions, and nine with a population of less than 3 millions, have the same representation in the

U. S. Senate. Can you suggest a remedy for this inequality?

INDIANA

There is a very simple remedy, my dear sir, but it will not be applied before our great grandchildren wear beards. It would relieve entirely too many aspiring statesmen of their occupation. It would disband a great army of clerical idlers. It would make it impossible for a public-office-is-a-private-snap president to become a multi-millionaire in six years on a $50,000 salary. Congressmen could not spend double their yearly stipend, then quit the political game with government bonds, brick blocks and large cash balances to their credit. It would make dishonesty in national politics practically impossible. Senators could not utilize committee secrets as a basis for profitable speculations in sugar, then impudently ask the people what they proposed to do about it—*à la* Brice. There would be no further excuses from this or the other coterie of pie-grafters that they could not fulfill their pre-election promises because the opposition would not permit. The sudden and radical alterations in governmental policy, which disturb the industrial equilibrium and precipitate disastrous panic, would no longer be possible. This would become in very truth a government of, for and by the people, instead of the wretched *fantoccini* of political rings, or the pitiful satrapy of an Anglican Cæsar. These are a few reasons why the remedy in question will not be adopted—at least not in our day. There are others, among which we may note the prevalent superstition that a form of government outlined by wise and patriotic men for 4 million people whose interests were for the most part commutual, will serve equally well for 75 million whose interests are often antagonistic. Simply as an abstract proposition, and to gratify the curiosity of my cor-

respondent, I would "suggest" that we abolish that antiquated and useless political excrescence known as the U. S. Senate, reduce the number of Representatives to one for each state, and one additional for every 100,000 voters, and require them to refer all laws of national importance to the people for ratification before going into effect. At the biennial election of Congressmen all proposed laws and repeals would be passed upon by the people, and thus we would attain that great desideratum, a staple, wieldable and pure Democracy—genuine self-government. We would no longer see hanging about the Congressional lobbies fat-pursed gentlemen with governmental axes to grind—they would have to submit to the people their pleas for special privilege. The President and Congress would be empowered to raise troops to repel armed invasion, actual or imminent; but questions of war and peace should be referred to the people, whose honor or interest they concern, and who must pay the bills and furnish the blood. That the will of the Nation might never be defeated by Congressional inaction, the House of Representatives should be required to submit to the plebiscite any measure whatsoever upon the petition of the legislatures of one-third of all the states. If Talleyrand be correct in saying that "everybody is wiser than anybody," this would insure to national measures a riper wisdom. It would at least prevent hasty legislation, for between the time of choosing a congress favorable to a particular policy, and the confirmation of its official acts, the masses would have time for reflection. The United States senate was once considered—and justly so—the ablest and *cleanest* deliberative body in the world; but it has degenerated into coterie of warring politicians of the peanut genus. It is supposed to act as a check upon the vagaries of the popular body and correct those errors

born of inexperience; but has for years been more rabid, irresponsible and corrupt than its correlative. It has become an insufferable nuisance, its only apparent *raison d'etre* indulgence in jejune wind-jamming and the indecent exposure of its own jackasserie. It often happens that the two houses are at cross purposes and nothing of importance can be effected. Legislation originating in one house is slaughtered in the other with the poisonous dagger of "party expedience," or escapes only after emasculation. The entire Nation will make a much better "balance wheel" for the House of Representatives than does that congeries of intellectual miscarriages now drawing $5,000 per annum and fat perquisites for misrepresenting the people. We have magnified the inconveniences of pure democracy, and to avoid them have made our representatives really our masters. I lay it down as an incontrovertible proposition that a people should never delegate political power which they may, without great inconvenience, exercise themselves. Representative government is the legitimate child of democracy; but if given free rein the impudent brat will never fail to dishonor its parent. We should send our best and wisest men to Washington as servants of Uncle Sam; but they should not be permitted final action on any matter of national importance without referring it to their employer.

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I was not much surprised when Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher contributed to that universal slop-tub, the *Ladies Home Journal*, an account of a mock slave sale in Plymouth Rock pulpit by the late-lamented "nest-hider," for "the Beecher family"—as a correspondent of the ICONOCLAST tersely puts it—"is fond of puncturing the old sores of the South with their pious pens, dipped in pure gall"; but I cannot imagine what object the papers

of this section have in reproducing the trashy article unless the average Southern editor,—like the presiding genius of the *Dal-Gal*—is seeking to corral a little Eastern advertising by insulting the memory of our sires. The she-coon whom Beecher "sold" with such wild acclaim—for the purpose of attracting a crowd—probably regretted a thousand times that she was not returned to "ole missus" instead of being turned loose to pick up a livelihood by devious methods among the super-sanctified heseraphs who sat beneath the drippings of a sanctuary defiled by a minister who had debauched the wife of his friend. The Icon has no intention of speaking disrespectfully of an old woman; but Editor Bok will scarce boom his circulation in the South by thus dragging garrulous decrepitude before the curtain to prattle of those, still doubtless dear to her, but whose birth was a blunder and whose life-work was humanity's loss. Beecher was a man of somewhat more than average intellect, but of easy morals and great animalism—as evidenced by his great loose lips, which suggests at once the sensuality of the Asiatic and the lewdness of the Ethiopian. He was a large, important-looking individual, possessed a deep resonant voice and considerable dramatic power—an ensemble that easily passes current with the populace as an intellectual paragon. With the physique and mental honesty of Alexander Stephens, Henry Ward Beecher would never have been heard of a hundred miles from home. He was a powerful sensation-monger, and a little more. Notoriety was the breath in his nostrils. Like Charles Sumner, he adopted abolition views because he was imbued with New England hatred of the South rather than love for the negro. His denial of the plenary inspiration of the Bible, while maintaining its validity as a Divine Revelation, appears to have been for advertising purposes

only—to attract notice as a theological *lusus naturae* Although not ten years dead, his writings have practically passed out of print, and his once so popular style of pulpit oratory now bespeaks the country parson. His sister—the female Erostratus of America, possessed the same incurable itch for notoriety, was of lesser intellect, but equally unscrupulous in her utterances. At a time when the Nation was a tinder-box; when the North and East were so bitter against the South as to eagerly accept without analysis the most flagrant absurdities, she managed by the exploitation of a tissue of the grossest falsehoods, unredeemed by the faintest suggestion of literary excellence, to put much money in her purse, acquire an international reputation as a writer and cause the loss of a million lives. I have not heard that in the flames she lighted with a torch of falsehood sizzled any blood of the Beechers. Ossowatamie Brown, the half-crazed Kansan, appears to have been the only persistent abolition agitator who possessed the courage of his convictions. We have flattered ourselves for some time that we had heard the last of the Beecher family—that the evil it did was at last interred with its bones; and we are not at all grateful to Editor Bok, that journalistic he-milliner, for giving us another glimpse of Mrs. Tilton's hedonistic Henry. It might be worth inquiring how much of the money made by pious Puritans out of the slave-trade found its way at one time and another, and by devious methods, into the bank accounts of the thrifty Beechers.

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Slavery by itself considered, cannot be commended; still the negroes now in America owe an eternal debt of gratitude to the Yankee skippers who kidnapped them on the Congo and sold them for the money which has

figured so extensively in the building of expensive churches and the feeding of fashionable preachers, as well as to the Southern people who transformed them from savage anthropoids into semi-civilized Republicans. But for the institution of slavery they would now be running naked in African jungles, worshipping dried lizards and subsisting on their own lice, instead of selling their suffrages to New England patriots and making nocturnal raids on the clothes-lines and hen-coops of the Southern people. I have received from an amateur ethnologist in the East —who is preparing a long-range magazine article on "The Race Problem—a letter asking: "Is it true, as reported, that the negro is growing blacker? If so, what is the reason?" It is true, and for the all-sufficient reason that the substitutes sent hither in the unlamented erstwhile by G. Cleveland and other perspiring Eastern patriots—and who undertook to solve "The Race Problem" from an ethnological as well as a political standpoint—have retired on a pension. The ante-bellum nigger was almost invariably black as the hinges of hades, as the specimens still extant amply testify—and this despite the abolition idea that the Southern planter keeps a colored harem and raised mulattos for the slave mart. No radical change in the complexion of the pickaninnies was noted in the wake of Grant's Westerners;—but in the rear of the Army of the Potomac the young George Washingtons and Abraham Lincolns preferred Boston brown-bread and baked beans to 'possum and sweet potatoes. The Plymouth Rock breed, not being adapted to the southern climate, is disappearing. In those southern states that are safely democratic, the coon is rapidly regaining his original complexion.

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There is a bill pending in Congress which proposes to jack the salaries of our national legislators up to $7,500 per annum for considering questions of "party expediency." It appears that we are not doing nearly enough for those blessed patriots who so cheerfully sacrifice themselves to save the country. However, it is not our fault, for we have placed the public purse in their keeping and authorized them to hit it early and often. They must not permit their modesty to cause them to suffer the pangs of penury in this blessed era of "progress and prosperity." While they are about it, they might just as well fix their remuneration at $10,000 per annum and $2 mileage. They should have at least two clerks and a French maid apiece—with the privilege, of course, of deserting their post at any time to attend to private business at public expense. If this be not satisfactory, perchance they will consent to take the country in part payment for the trouble of saving it. Let us all devoutly pray that the pending bill may pass. There should be at least one advance of wages to mark "the restoration of confidence and the revival of business."

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I had somewhat to say in a recent issue of the Icon. regarding the kissing laws of the Keystone State. Two young ladies, residing near Pittsburg, had a prominent Baptist preacher named Bond arrested for jamming his ministerial muzzle into their faces without permission. The testimony was direct, but Bond was discharged. Whether the court held that in Pennsylvania, as in Texas, promiscuous osculation is a preacher's prerogative, or that the kisses appropriated constituted sufficient punishment, I am not informed. There are kisses more punitive than a term in the penitentiary, but these are seldom of the variety which must be taken by assault. The indignant

maidens next appealed to the Baptist council for protection from Rev. Busser Bond, a third damosel, who had also been forcibly despoiled of her honey-dew, joining in the complaint. All three testified that the preacher had talked to them improperly, lunched off their ruby lips and folded them to his manly brisket by force, but the council, while admitting that their dear brother in Christ had been "guilty of indiscretion," recommended that he still be permitted to preach. Bond's "indiscretion" consisted in getting caught. The council evidently considered that when he experienced an inexpressible yearning for sanctified yum-yum he should select some well-seasoned sister who would give him a Roland for his Oliver instead of appealing to the police. St. Paul commands Christians to "greet one another with a kiss"; but I can scarce suppose that the great Apostle would have approved such a greeting in the utter absence of reciprocity.

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For a rank specimen of sublimated audacity, commend me to that Pandarus of the plutocracy and Judas Iscariot of the wage-worker, known to infamy as the *Railway Age*. Whenever I see a copy of that currish sheet I am reminded of Macaulay's estimate of Bertrand Barere. In it "the qualities which are the proper objects of hatred and the qualities which are the proper objects of contempt, preserve an exquisite and absolute harmony." The *Age* attempted to swing the railway vote for McKinley in the late election, and is now assuming that it succeeded. I have no idea how deep it was permitted to put its venal paw in the Republican slush-fund; but if it received a single penny for its "fluence" it should be indicted for obtaining money by false pretense. A few of the upper servants of the railway magnates—those who cultivate the art of fawning that thrift may follow—doubtless turn

to the *Age* as a valuable tutor; but it has little circulation and less influence in the tin-bucket brigade. It is regarded by them as an enemy, the obsequious bootlick of the bosses. It is the egestive organ of the Rockefellers, the rhum voided by the Vanderbilts, the faithful echo of the Ashleys, the chambermaid of the Hills, the cloaca of the Hutchinsons—the tail-wagging, saliva-excreting yaller dog of the almighty dollar. It was with the *Age* —ever concocting some coarse insult to the wage-worker to prove its fealty to the plutocrat, some new skullduggery to win a hand-out from Dives—that those pledge-me-to-McKinley cards originated, which so many superintendents *requested* the operatives to sign. When the editor of the *Age* asserts that no pressure was brought to bear upon railway employees to bring them into the McKinley camp, he deliberately lies, and that for no other conceivable reason than that, like Pecksniff, he is " so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of falsehood that he is canting even in discovery." No manager declared in so many words that failure to support McKinley would result in dismissal, for the simple reason that so flagrant an insult would have been resented with force and might have resulted in tar and feathers; but many of them sent out the *Age's* impudent pledge cards which carried the *order* to either *sign or refuse to sign*, which was of itself a coercive act, for none knew what penalty might follow refusal, and thousands were so situated they could not afford to give even a shadow of offense. No man worthy to wear the crown of American sovereignty, no man possessing the instincts of a gentleman, no man who is not corrupt to the heart's core, and an enemy of his country—deserving to be hanged in a hair halter—will so much as tender unsought political *advice* to men dependent upon his good will for employment, unless he gives them positive assur-

ance that their failure to heed it will be in no wise resented. With labor so pitifully dependent upon the coöperation of capital, and the obtainment of situations so difficult, the employer practically holds in his hands the power of life and death. The man who even permits it to be suspected that he will employ this baleful power in the field political, deserves to be damned by an eulogy in the *Age*. That feculent sheet assumes that the railway vote went practically solid for McKinley, but says that "*an occasional worthless individual here and there*" voted for Bryan, and adds that those affected by the "*dishonorable taint will suffer for their folly.*" Does the *Age* mean to intimate that Democrats will be quietly weeded out as "worthless individuals," and their places filled by political peons? It is utterly impossible to determine whether the bulk of the railway vote went for McKinley or Bryan. The tables compiled by the *Age*, in support of its theorem, simply proving that it is a demagogic ass whose appearance might be improved, even though its intellect were not enlarged, by the amputation of its ears. It can be taken for granted, however, that those self-respecting employees who voted for McKinley, did not do so because of the *Age*, but despite thereof. They were Republicans from principle and declined to leave their party to escape the company of a journalistic pole-cat. What the *Age* editor really needs as cure for his colossal impudence, in presuming to speak for the American railway employees, is a brakeman's box-toed boot so vigorously applied that he would be compelled to take his meals from the mantelpiece.

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The "restoration of confidence" and formal inauguration of the Saturnian Age that was to follow the election of Major McKinley, seems to have slipped an eccentric. Banks are bursting like painted bladders, great commer-

cial houses are collapsing, factories stand idle, the price of products has a downward tendency and the land is filling with the idle legions of labor. In the little state of New Hampshire alone—where the farmer plants his grain in the crevices of the rocks with a shotgun and harvests it by means of a rope-ladder—22 saving concerns with deposits aggregating 18 millions, have succumbed, alleging as excuse the inability of those to whom they had loaned money, to pay either principal or interest. The silver men may now urge that business is so rotten bad under the gold standard, that depositing money in a savings bank were like pouring water into a wicker basket. To the "50-cent dollar" argument—or idiocy—they can reply that "half a loaf is better than no bread." Had Bryan been elected, the present distressing condition of the country would have been laid at his door, and the threatened movement to prevent his inauguration might have been expected to materialize. In the face of so many commercial ills, despite the constantly augmenting industrial depression, Congress is considering only the manufacture of political capital. In the words of Sir Richard Steele, "We are governed by a set of drivellers, whose folly takes away all dignity from distress and makes even calamity ridiculous."

There is to be a "monetary conference of business men" held at the capital of Hoosierdom on the 12th inst., as a result of a powwow of the plutocrats at the same place some weeks ago. The scheme appears to be "the removal of the currency question from the sphere of politics" and its reference to "a non-partisan commission"—the members whereof the plutocrats in conference assembled will kindly undertake to appoint! The commission will then proceed to formulate a scheme satisfactory to its masters,

upon which all the power of the bond-clippers, mortgage companies and other contractionists, will be exerted to cram it down the pantagreulian throat of congress. A systematic onslaught upon the gold reserve and another bond issue will probably institute an important feature of this campaign of education. The tariff is likewise to be "taken out of politics" by these perspiring patriots, that we may have "a permanency of financial methods that cannot be altered by any passing whim of the people"—the Indianapolis conferences modestly undertaking to supply Uncle Sam with both brains and balance! More stability in our financial policy is greatly to be desired, frequent alterations meaning disaster to industry; but we are not quite ready, we thank you, to surrender our political prerogatives to a commission appointed by the plutocrats. When we get tired of playing at American sovereignty—when we find that our "passing whims" incapacitate us for self-government—we'll select a czar instead of submitting to the impudent exactions of a self-constituted oligarchy. It occurs to me that what these wise men really need is a copy of Webster's Unabridged. Place the regulation of the currency or the tariff where you will, and it is still "in politics," still *is* politics, because it has to do with the science of government. This nation is becoming entirely too loose-lipped. Some of these days it will lose its language and be reduced to the making of signs and the gabble of geese. Even now, with various campaigns of education just ended and others begun, it doesn't know what it is talking about half the time. It's bazoo seems to be "subbing" for its brain.

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There is now talk of Russian intervention to end the Turkish atrocities in Armenia. And yet it has been but a little while since thousands of Jewish subjects of the

Czar fled to Turkey for protection. The Mohammedan Sultan might return Christian Russia's compliment by abolishing the ice-hell in Siberia. Turkey and Russia have long been running neck-and-neck for the pennant of infamy, the crown of cruelty. By all means let them reform each other.

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RECIPROCITY IN SUGAR PLUMS.

For two years past the Iconoclast has been striving with all its strength to jack the code of journalistic ethics up a notch; but I am beginning to fear this labor of love will be energy lost. I have tried to inoculate the editors of our great dailies with some faint conception of the divine virtue of modesty—to convince them that the earth did revolute and the sun did shine before they arrived with their cargo of supernal wisdom and assumed control of the cosmos; but confess, with a feeling of profound sorrow, that the attempt has proven a dismal failure. Whether the seed fell upon barren ground, or had mildewed ere it was cast forth in the humble hope that it would take root in the intellectual subsoil of ye able editor, deponent saith not; but certain it is that the disgusting practice of self-laudation has not diminished. The *Gal-Dal News*, alias the *Double-Ender*, otherwise the *Old Lady*, is an apt illustration of this evil. I select it for illustration, not because its offenses are ranker than those of gossip-pedlers in other states; but that readers of the Iconoclast in far lands may learn that Texas actually has daily papers and is, therefore, at least in fashion if not in the line of progress. Strange as it may appear, there be still millions of people in our own America who imagine that Texas is peopled chiefly with niggers, greasers and coyotes, our accomplished colonels a compromise between Jesse

James and Alkali Ike. It is the pleasant privilege of the Iconoclast to inform the effete East that, by patient effort, we have corralled the "higher culture" and now leave our bronchos outside the saloon, eat pie with a fork, have Wednesday evening prayers—for the benefit of other people—and support a daily press of which we are not a little proud. The Texas press is perhaps equal in ability and enterprise to any that can be found in a sparsely populated country, which is not saying much, 'tis true; for sparse population means scarce and uncertain newspaper patronage, upon which subsist—heaven knows how—a surprising number of economic failures and intellectual misfits. When experience has demonstrated that a man is good for nothing in God's universe but the consumption of victuals, he may be expected to blossom forth as the publisher of a provincial newspaper and take the country under his immediate protection. But, as hitherto affirmed, the Texas press is well up to—perhaps slightly above—the average. It is troubled, however, with a sweet tooth, and its yearning for tid-bits and taffy makes it at times ridiculous, even disgusting. As insurance against any saccharine shortage, it has formed a *societe d'admiration mutuelle*, the members whereof feed each other on gumdrops and treacle—tickle and are tickled in return—greatly to the edification of the public and the satisfaction of all concerned. The Iconoclast, it may be unnecessary to say, has never been admitted to membership, it being a trifle shy of flubdub and short on slobber; still it is permitted to sit on the picket fence and watch that fair exchange of sugar plums which is the very apotheosis of reciprocity. A distinguished member of the society is the Austin *Statesman*, a paper which has no valid excuse for existing, yet either lacks sufficient energy to get off the earth, or lives—as Carlyle says—to

"save salt." There is a superstition extant at Austin that the *Statesman*, like *ursus horribilis*, sucks its paws for sustenance; but I suspect that it is the Doc. Tanner of Texas dailies. It recently heaved, with an effort that must have sprained its suspenders, an unctuous gob of home-made sorghum sugar at the *Double-Ender* in the humble hope that it would be reproduced in the columns of its 'steemed contemporary, and a few people beyond the confines of Travis country there informed of the existence of Austin's matutinal mistake.

Its hopes were more than realized. The *Old Lady*—like most females of "uncertain age"—cannot receive a compliment without hastening to inform her neighbors of that fact. She never fails to poke the puffs she gets under the noses of her patrons—albeit when caught in a flagrant falsehood or a disreputable piece of scullduggery, she has, like a certain little boy, absolutely nothing to say. The *Old Lady* not only reproduced on her editorial page the *Statesman's* fulsome flattery—rolled the taffy like a sweet morsel under her tongue—but supplemented it with a column pæan in her own praise. I am pleased to learn that the double-headed harlot entertains a good opinion of herself; for I doubt if even the country papers that flatter her for advertising purposes only, regard her otherwise than with contempt. She has been caught *flagrante delicto* with too many corporation libertines and gay political gallants to be really loved or admired by any white man for herself alone. Considered only as a purveyor of news, the *Old Lady* is to be commended. The *Gal-Dal* is the only newspaper worthy of the name between New Orleans and the Pacific Ocean; but its editorial page is venal without wit and pompous without wisdom, while its practice of exploiting the puffs it receives is shockingly provincial. If "good wine needs no bush" certainly a

good newspaper needs no cicerone to point out its excellence to the man of average intellect. A reproduced puff is not akin to the advertisement of the merchant seeking patronage, but resembles his argument to a customer who has purchased and paid for his merchandise, that it is really worth the money. Now isn't this a pitiful position for a "great daily" newspaper! Is it possible that the "intelligent public" of which we hear so much, cannot be trusted to pass judgment upon the merits of the very paper it is perusing? What would we say of that orator who interlarded a long discourse with accounts of what others had said of his learning and eloquence—then proceeded to extol himself? We would say that he was "a ass"; and what is applicable to the orator is equally so to the editor, for the work of both is in evidence. To secure an audience the orator may properly inform the people how competent critics regard his claim to be heard; but when he comes upon the platform we do not expect him to prattle about his ability, but prove it. It is perfectly legitimate for a publisher to advertise his wares as much as he likes; but when we purchase them we want to see their inherent worth for ourselves instead of being informed with blare of trumpet, that it has been discovered by the Weekly Weinerwurst or the Daily Slumgullion. The *News* never tires of telling us what it has done for Texas, but it is painfully reticent regarding what Texas has done for the *News*. One would suppose from its turgid self-praise and hysterical autotheism, that, but for the lift received from its archimedean lever, the Lone Star could not have risen from below the political horizon to its proud position in mid-heaven. Yet what *has* it done for Texas that it should continue to throw boquets at its own bulging brisket and harrow our souls with suggestions of a debt of gratitude too mighty for amortization? Nothing

in God's great world but make merchandise of the daily doings of men and furnish it to the public for a monetary consideration—to collect and peddle all kinds of gossip exactly as the green grocer does assorted "garden-sass." It is and has been of no more value in Texas' development than any other business concern employing a like amount of capital. A newspaper is necessary to a town; and so is a bank, a butchershop and a boarding-house. A town can get along much better without a local newspaper than without a grocery-store. A well conducted newspaper is an educational force not to be despised; but it has long been a serious question with sociologists whether the average daily, with its burthen of murders and rapes, hangings and suicides, society slop and sensationalism,—not to mention editorials written by men whether ignorant or biased by partisan prejudice—does so much good as harm. Certainly no competent educator would care to select reading lessons for his pupils from the daily papers —those flagrant desecrators of the memory of Sts. Lindley and Dionysius Thrax. It is popularly supposed that a daily newspaper confers incalculable benefit on a state by advertising it abroad. That depends on the area of its circulation. The Dallas end of the *News* doubtless sells a few copies in Arkansas and Oklahoma; but its territory abruptly ends where it meets the Kansas City papers coming south. This, with a few copies which the San Antonio *Express* send to Mexico, is the extent of that much mooted "advertising" which Texas receives from her daily press —and for which we are supposed to owe it a debt of gratitude heavy enough to make Hercules hump-shouldered! Not one man in a million north of the Ohio ever saw a Texas daily. They bring comparatively no money into the state, but help eat up the substance already here. Such being the case, does not the *Gal-Dal* exhibit sublime

gall in prating to the people from whom it draws its support, of the great work it has been for more than half a century doing for them and "grand old Texas"? The Texas *Siftings*, when published at Austin, did more every month to advertise the state abroad than has the *News* in its fifty odd years of existence. It circulated from Cape Cod to California, collected thousands of dollars every month from the entire country and turned it loose in Texas,—just as the ICONOCLAST is doing to-day. Yet even the *Siftings* learned by sad experience that Texas could get along much better without it than could it without Texas. It is said that an aged fool is the worst of fools, and the garrulous idiocy of the *Old Lady* confirms the adage. Shut up, your slut, and buckle down to your regular business—that of collecting nickle fees for playing Mrs. Grundy, hawking advertising acreage, peddling snide sewing machines and cheap World's Fair pictures, and striving to convince the few readers you have elsewhere that our statesmen are all thieves, and our people too deeply imbued with communistic heresies to make the investment of capital here advisable.

* * *

OBSCENE RELIGIOUS RITES.

WERE THE JEWS PHALLIC WORSHIPPERS?

J. M. WHEELER, one of the most forceful of England's atheistical writers, has favored me with a copy of his book, entitled "Bible Studies," in which he waltzes into the Jewish religion with the vigor of a Titan taking a fall out of the Olympian Gods. The preface is by G. W. Foote, publisher of *The Freethinker*, perhaps the ablest of those journals that are hammering away, with more or less effect, at the Christian cultus. Just why those who deny

the divine inspiration of the Bible should be permitted, by common consent, as it were, to monopolize the title of "free-thinkers," I cannot conceive. All thought is "free"—mind is absolute monarch, whether it abide in the brain of prince or pauper, sovereign or slave. It is the architect of all laws and subject to none. Bad environment or false education may mislead the mind, just as the skillful juggler deceives the sight; but all the thumbscrews of the Inquisition cannot compel belief. That is a matter entirely beyond the reach of force or fear. In the penetralia of man Reason presides as judge, and will not consent until the evidence submitted is satisfactory. Even the heart cannot sway this more than Roman tribunal. Fain would Othello think Desdemona honest, and so she was; but the evidence submitted damned her, and she had to die. Self interest may command the knee to bow, the tongue to bear false witness; but the mind of man, howsoever mistaken it may be, remains absolutely honest. The man who accepts—not ostensibly but actually—as God's infallible word every sentence of the Bible, is as much a "free-thinker" as he who denies it in toto. Whether he be so wise is another question. I prefer those who believe too much to those who believe too little. The man who is convinced that a personal God evolved the universe out of nothing—disproving the maxim *ex nihil nihil fit*—may be as wise, for aught I know, as those who believe that Mr. Wheeler's analytical mind is the result of a self-generated "force" operation on self-created "matter" in accordance with immutable "laws" begotten in the womb of universal Night by all-pervading Chaos. But this is old straw that has been rethreshed a thousand times and yielded little profit. While it is unquestionably true that a literal interpretation of the Scriptures makes man a pitiful slave and renders the Deity ridiculous, it were

better to search them for beauty than deformity, for wisdom than for folly. The sun, God's greatest publication, has been worshipped by hundreds of millions; yet it requires but a casual scrutiny to inform us that it has many flaws. Despite these defects, however, it supplies us with light and warmth and food—fills the world with the beauty of woman and the incense of flowers. Taken as a whole, it must be conceded that the sun is a success; may not the Bible also, despite the manifold blemishes revealed by the microscopes of hypercritics, have a valid *raison d'etre?* I receive no clerical salary—not so much as the doubtful increment of an occasional donation party or the beggarly rake-off of a penny collection—for defending the Bible; but I cannot forget that for something like a thousand years our Celtic and Saxon forefathers revered it as the word of God, and a man may be pardoned for protesting that his progenitors were not all knaves or fools. Of course the atheist is privileged to place such estimate as he pleased upon the morals and mentality of his ancestors. There is a Latin axiom to the effect that "a middle course is safest and best;" and this is especially true of Biblical criticism. The "golden mean" is, I opine, equi-distant from God-intoxicated cranks who see a divine allegory in the bawdy-house balderdash known as the "Song of Solomon," and those theological zoilists who find in the Bible only foolish fable and deliberate falsehood. Those who fail to give the Scriptures due credit for all their truth and beauty are cupable as those who strive to conceal their blemishes. The first is the bond-slave of prejudice, the latter blinded by superstition, and of these extremes it were difficult to determine which is most to be condemned.

Mr. Wheeler's book is well worth the reading, albeit it shows but the reverse side of the shield. I regret that a

man of his erudition and mental force should have followed the bad example of other atheistical writers and studied the Bible from the standpoint of a prosecuting attorney rather than from the impartial position of an umpire. I cannot call to mind any infidel author of whom it may be said, as Carlyle said of Goethe: "He has fearlessly searched out and denied the False; but he has not forgotten, what is equally essential and infinitely harder, to search out and admit the True." Mr. Wheeler has, without perhaps intending it, sought to throw into bold relief only the blemishes of the Bible. He suggests a chemist analyzing rather than a botanist describing a blossom. He does not show the beautiful corolla and honied stamens where sucks the bee, but tells us how its component parts were absorbed from this or the other pile of foul compost where buzzes the bluebottle fly. He ignores the warm kisses it has received from the summer sun and the silver tears with which night has nourished it, but neglects not to note every scurvy insect and poisonous worm that have stung the bud or left a slimy trail across the full-blown blossom. Thus he assures us that the Jews were long addicted to phallic worship and human sacrifice—that their Deity was represented by the procreative organs of the human body, an image of which was carried in the Ark of the Covenant. Mr. Wheeler brings the Bible into court and cites a cloud of witnesses among Christians and Pagans, Jews and Gentiles, in support of his position. As the Christian religion is usually (albeit erroneously) regarded as but a development of the old Jehovistic cult of the Jews, it will severely shock many sensitive souls to be thus flatly told that their cherished faith is founded upon the phallus—that their God was originally but an obscene image to which human sacrifices were offered, and whose devotees considered prostitution a sacred religious rite;

still Mr. Wheeler has told careful Bible students nothing they have not frequently heard before. I submit, however, that my English friends and those who agree with him have not clearly made out their case. That the God of the Jews when he first appeared on the semi-historical horizon was very much a barbarian cannot be gainsaid; that many of the rites with which his devotees sought to propitiate him were extremely savage I freely concede; but with due respect to the many learned men who differ with me, I deny that we have good grounds for the assumption that the ligni-yoni (male and female organs of generation) was ever the recognized symbol of Jehovah, or that human sacrifices were, as a rule, offered in his honor. If the Jehovistic worship ever possessed such shocking features they were abated in prehistoric times. All scholars concede that polytheism preceded monotheism—that the latter marks a decided intellectual and religious advance. No Monotheistic people, so far as I know, have offered human sacrifices to their Deity, employed the phallus as his symbol or recognized indiscriminate coition as a religious rite—and the Jews were monotheists so far back as we can trace their history. What their Deity was in pre-Bible days, I know not; but as he has been steadily advancing from savagery to civilization for some thirty centuries, he must have been in that far time "a holy terror." According to even the present orthodox conception, he's an unhappy cross between Jack-the-Ripper and Julius Cæsar, old man Bender and Lucretia Borgia. And strange as it may appear, every man who assumes to give a better character to Almighty God is accused of blasphemy. "Man paints himself in his Gods," says Schiller—which may explain why the church will not permit the Lord to be pictured as much better than the average preacher.

Many scholarly men assume that the rite of circum-

cision practiced by the Jews, and their custom of offering beasts and birds upon the altar of Jehovah, are but survivors of phallic worship and human sacrifices, quite overlooking the fact that those nations which carried the worship of obscene images to the greatest excess did not circumcise. The early Jews probably fed their Deity, much as the Greeks did the shades of their dead; and as the priests usually consumed the roast meats, leaving only the blood and "sweet savor" to the Lord, it is evident—unless we assume that the Jews were anthropophagous—that a fat bullock would answer better than a human body. The origin of the rite of circumcision is lost in the shadows of the centuries. Many theories have been advanced to account for it, such as sanitary considerations, a superstition that it is conducive to fecundity, and blood-covenanting. The latter is by far the most plausible explanation. As the government developed into a theocracy the rite was made obligatory, so that God might by this sign readily recognize his "chosen people," as he did by the blood on the doorposts when He slew the first-born of Egypt. We learn from the Bible that many Jews, after the flight from the land of Pharaoh, followed after "false gods," and committed many iniquities. The worship of Baal and Ashtoroth, to which they were much addicted, was essentially phallic, Baal-Peor being none other than Priapus (the male principal of procreation), at whose festivals thousands of virgins were prostituted. That at times these obscenities penetrated the temple itself and the worship of Jehovah became as libidinous as that of Baal, as disgusting as that of Dionysos, such eminent Jewish scholars as Drs. Kalisch and Cheyne do not deny; but this seems to have been a corruption rather than a recognized tenet of the Jehovistic cult—a taint of which many prophets, kings and priests strove valiantly to

purify it. No inconsiderable portion of the Old Testament is occupied with the most dreadful anathemas hurled at those very "abominations" which Mr. Wheeler would have us believe were recognized rites of the Jewish religion. Thrown for centuries among people addicted to human sacrifices and sacred obscenities, it were strange indeed had not many of the Jews been led astray. In Egypt, Greece, Phœnicia, Assyria—from Memphis to Babylon, and even in far India—polytheism and phallic worship prevailed. That through slavery in Africa, captivity in Asia, commercial intercourse and final subjugation by a polytheistic people, the Jews, as a race, retained their monotheism and did not succumb utterly to the sacred obscenities of other nations, proves conclusively that, however faulty their religion, howsoever doubtful its origin, it was at that age the best in the world. To charge upon the Jews as a people the sins of such backsliders as Solomon—who was the patron and promoter of the worship of Moloch, Ashtaroth and Chemosh—were as unjust as for future historians to denounce the American people as a nation of Mormons.

But granting that we can trace in the Bible itself evidence incontrovertible that the worship of the God of Israel was originally obscene and murderous: What then? Are we to judge a religion by what it has been, or by what it is? Shall we condemn science because of the folly of the alchemists, the Hindu cosmography or the Ptolemic system? It may be urged that we are creatures of progress, while "God knew the end from the beginning," and would have made no errors in his communications to mankind. How are we to know that he has ever erred? Must I be branded as a fool by my son because he understood me not in his infancy? Now that he has donned the *toga virilis* and can think my thoughts, will he assume that I am a

creature of his creation? Were it not better to *see* God before attempting to *oversee* him? Is it not possible that he was all-wise from the beginning—that his apparent progress from savagery to civilization is due to our own better understanding? Because our Father in Heaven never talks Greek philosophy nor reveals the esoteric secrets of science to intellectual infants, can we be sure that he is wanting in wisdom? To a child a rattle is a revelation and a rag doll a thing to be adored.

What care we if some thousands of years ago the Jews worshiped Ishtar or Ashera and made the Temple a sacred brothel—if they carved an obscene image and carried it about in a box? Does that prove the non-existence of a Deity? Does it not argue rather that the Jews were in that era almost as ignorant as our own ancestors? Does it not suggest that the religious principle is inherent in man and must have its correlative—that until the Atheists have gotten hold of him and warped his intellect he feels the necessity of adoring a power which he cannot comprehend? Phallic worship, once almost universal in the world and still extant in India, is not necessarily idolatry. It is iconolatry—the adoration of an image, not for itself but as a symbol of that creative power not yet understood by science, which calls man from the Unknown into Time and Space and endows him with those wondrous faculties, Strength and Reason. If this be a distinction without a difference than are we all idolaters, for the Christians at every age and clime and sect have reverenced symbols, and do so at the present day. All have their holy places, their sacred books, their bread and wine, symbolical of Christ's body and blood. Catholics bow before the image of the Blessed Virgin, while Protestant preachers shriek "blasphemer" because a man drags the cross and crown of thorns into a political discourse.

Even if all the charges preferred by Mr. Wheeler and his compeers against the ancient Israelitish cult be strictly true, I fail to see wherein it concerns those who worship Christ. We are of a different race and a hostile religion, hence, can have no personal interest in the controversy. Judaism is no more the parent of Christianity than the whale is mother to the horse. The two cults have no more in common than have the pomegranite and potato. Not a blessed one of the old Hebrew prophets (King James' bishops to the contrary notwithstanding) suspected that Jehovah had or would ever have an "Only Begotten Son," or that there was such a thing in existence as a Holy Ghost. Judaism has but one God, while Christianity has three—which the scholastics for ten centuries have striven valiantly to weld into one, but have only succeeded in manufacturing a kind of Celestial Cerberus. In the beginning there was no pretention that Christianity was aught but polytheism. No one suspected that God was reigning in Heaven and inhabiting the womb of his terrestrial mother at the same time, petitioning himself in the Garden of Gethsemane and denying his own tearful prayer. Not only did we adopt the polytheism of the Pagans, but we borrowed of them the Immaculate Conception, Resurrection and the idea of Immortality. Even the morality and social ethics of the New Testament, as well as most of our religious rites, are inherited from those very "heathen" at whom the Hebrew prophets delighted to launch their thunderbolts. Mr. Wheeler suggests that traces of phallic worship can be found even in the Christian faith. We find nothing particularly remarkable about that when we consider its theological lineage. When we remember that half a dozen decaying polytheistic cults of every degree of worthlessness furnished the material of which Christianity was slowly shaped, we may as well

wonder that Mr. Wheeler should have expended so much labor tracing the Judaistic tree back to its original ooze, while leaving us almost alone. The world was a theological chaos when Christ called such workmen as could be had to construct a new religious cosmos. They employed such material as they could come at and with what skill God had gifted them withal; more can no men do. They heaped Carian marble from the Parthenon or sun-baked brick from the ruined temples of Baal and Cyble, and cemented it with philosophic mud from the Nile and theological débris from the banks of the Euphrates. The edifice erected by these men resembled nothing in the heavens or the earth or the waters under the earth—unless indeed it be the barricade of the Faubourg St. Antoine described by Victor Hugo. A barricade it was, an amorphous pile planted down by a few determined men as a bulwark against the floodtide of savagery and godlessness that had broken loose upon the world. Unsightly, illogical, yes; but worthy reverence as representing the suffering and toil, the blood and tears of honest men. Behind that bulwark the human race was enabled to rally for an heroic effort, and the slow-rolling centuries hammered the shapeless pile of odds-and-ends into that majestic temple we call the Church of Christ. Most of the bricks from Baalbec, the mud from the Nile and unclean ooze from the Euphrates have been expunged; but here and there remains a taint to remind us of the olden time when miracles passed current, witchcraft was in vogue and slavery regarded as a divine institution. Possibly there still remains a taint of the old phallic worship also; but the symbol of Priapus in these latter days is usually some well-fed preacher. It is curious to reflect how widespread this worship once was in the world—what a prominent part wine and women have played in the religious rites of the human race. From the

Bacchic orgie and Dionysonian debauch to Beecher's euphemistic "nest-hiding" and the individual communion cup lately introduced in fashionable churches, is a long cry; still our o'er curious critics may see in one the prototype of the other. It takes many ages of earnest endeavor to purge even the best of religions of all its earthly dross, and Mr. Wheeler should aid the ICONOCLAST in this laudable enterprise instead of advising the perspiring Hercules that the Augean Stables cannot be cleansed.

* * *

BEAUTY AND DEATH.

WILLIAM MARION REEDY.

RECENT articles in the ICONOCLAST have dealt with "the most beautiful woman in the world." The Apostle would give, he says, sums fabulous, to me, to gaze upon her. He shall see her once, once only, and after that shall be naught to him any sound or sight.

The most beautiful woman in the world is found once by all men. She has never been described because the sight puts upon eye the seal of darkness older than the world and upon the lips the silence inviolable.

Beauty is not of the world. It is not native here nor to the manner born. The quality is not the essential property of anything substantial. It is something that falls upon this life from beyond it. It is gone before the mind has sensed it, and if not gone it has changed. Beauty is not of the thought alone, subjective; is vaguer than a memory half-forgotten, but the sense of it is the most acute of passions. Beauty is not a thing we have. It is a thing we want, we hunger for. What we call beauty is merely the longing with regret at its core, for something that is

untranslatable to the soul. The greatest impression of beauty one can recall of all his life is a feeling, or something subtler still than feeling, as of a discontent so vast as to be almost despair. There's not a scrap of song, or sea, or sky, a thrill of thought, that we call beautiful, that does not hold in it the essence of a mighty dread, that is indistinguishable from desire. Think of the moments that have held the thought of beauty! They are gone. That is the only thing we know. Try to recall them in their detail and lo—these moments are the ones in which we lived not at all. Whatever beauty may be it certainly is not to be apprehended. No moment can contain it. Nor any eternity. It may be there is such a thing as beauty but no man lives to tell that he has seen it. What we all know is that we have had now and then, a hint, a premonition of it, as if it passed viewlessly anear to us; or better still, as if for once we soared out of ourselves and came so near to it that its mystery and majesty drove us back into our prison of clay. There is in what we call beauty nothing more definable in terms of the emotions than a certain awe, an awe that obliterates ourselves. Remember the beauties you have known and what do you find? Merely that you have forgotten; merely that for the term of their spell you were as nothing.

Take the beautiful, for that is more fictile than the word beauty. When it appeals to us in form, in any of the modes of motion, as light or sound, in any method of impression, what is beautiful? It is the method that makes us not ourselves. The most beauty-filled moments we can recall are moments of practical annihilation. The prime element of beauty seems to be the creation in the individual of the barest glimpse of not being. Let any reader of these lines try to summon to recollection the time he was happiest. He will find that what he calls the happiness is

only the slimly held thought of the time when he had no thought at all. The minor pleasures of life have the effect of making us forget other things. The greater the happiness, the greater number of things we forget. The supreme happiness must be therefore the state in which "all things are forgot," the divine drunk. That is the secret. Master Francoys Rabelais has the only revelation. His mucky allegory with its climax of the Divine Bottle has the chart of the mystery. Drink! 'Tis the only happiness. It is, in the ultimate, of all things the most desirable—forgetfulness.

The object of all philosophy, according to those who have philosophized, is happiness. The end of all philosophy, its result, is an ecstasy. Happiness is beauty. In happiness is forgetfulness proportioned to the extent of happiness. Ecstasy is oblivion. Rest is the only rapture. The perfect beauty is rest.

The drift of my logic, if it be logic, is that beauty is but a veiled light, a witchery unearthly, as impalpability—it is the glimmering in us, now and then, when the conjunctions of time, place, person and circumstances are properties of the ideal. There is an ideal. Each of us knows it. With each it is different, but with us all its meaning is, in common speech, satisfaction, or, to refine further, content. Beauty is but a pang toward content. It is composed in part of a regret for a peace out of which we have been lost and a desire for a peace we have never known. There is no beauty that is not impressed upon us as pain. Look at a sunset, a statue, a woman's face, or into the deeps of Heaven. Listen to a storm, a sonnet or a song. Do we say they are beautiful if we do not in saying so feel a touch of pity—a pity for ourselves, for the very universe and even for its Creator? Pain is the very soul of beauty. The heart of happiness is a hurt so exquisite

as to pass into pleasure. The grandest passion is misery, and the culminating manifestation of it is a diminution of the vital forces. The Apostle will laugh at Swinburne; but 'tis Swinburne who, in singing, philosophizes through his feelings and calls Venus "Our Lady of Pain." Mary the mother wears that title in a more pagan cult than Swinburne, who is Sappho surging in a man. Christianity is worship of an Agony. All religion is such in its fundamental principle. The world is on its knees to the Black Sun—Death; to the Horror which, hanging ever over life, makes life sweet. How, chiefly, is the world made beautiful? By the thought that it passes, the thought that all things die. All poetry that may be called great is only sadness given voice; and music ever is a wailing and a sobbing. What is pleasure to the ear transmutes into sorrow in the heart and soul. The perfect poem, the perfect music, if ever written, will be the expression of a broken heart. The sublime and the beautiful are inseparable from the thought of death; and even in humor observe that its note is the note of pity. All pleasurable things are but the reminders of the great fact of life—death. Death is the substance of life. All other things are but accidents thereof.

Why is woman the symbol of beauty? There is but one answer. It is that woman represents the incarnation of pain; and pain is only a reminder of death. Desire, speak we of it either physiologically or psychologically, is pain. Why prove this by argument? Look into your own inexperience and dare deny it. Think but a moment of your love, of all your loves, and say truthfully, no matter whether the beloved were Penelope, Phillis or Phyrne, the loving was not a pain. Of all whom any one has loved, may it not be said that when we loved them the most intensely, that was the time when the love found

itself merged in the heart in a deep dumb resentment of the fact of death? Again, in love of the highest kind is there not a certain yearning for death to come to you or to the beloved in order that in some undefined way love might be made to manifest itself in triumph over death? Death is love's corallary—"Greater love than this hath no man" etc. God manifested his love for man by dying. The two ideas are inseparable. Love is death; it is self-effacement.

Woman is the object of the sexual instinct. The sexual instinct is the unavailing protest against death. Spiritualize love as you may, the sexual instinct is the one great motive. Fancy is a fangle to disguise the fact. We wish to propagate because we know we must die. We love woman. The instinct operating in us endears her to our minds with the sanctity of our vain hope against the inevitable. She takes on appearances given her by our desire to heighten our desire. The something from without the world that we call beauty transfigures her. She is the abyss that calls to us to lose ourselves in it. The last want of love is away beyond mere possession; it is a wish to be absorbed in the personality of the beloved. This is but a showing of the craving for annihilation of individuality. The very dread of death therefore makes us seek it. What a maze.

A woman is beautiful, we say, but it is not metaphysically true. It can be predicated revocally of no one woman, of no one set of women. This, all will admit. The beauty that one man recognizes another passes by. There is no rule for beauty. It cannot be measured, weighed, described. It has none of the qualities of a fact. It has not the tangibility of a dream, which can be resolved into its elements in the actual. A woman is beautiful to the man who loves her. That woman whom most men love

is most beautiful. That man is the best lover who is most different kinds of man. But the man loves because he desires to live and knows that he must die. It is not man's will to die. Dying is imposed upon him by something outside the world. Love is the result of that imposition. Beauty is the result of Love. It is not of the world, but from beyond it. Death that begets love that begets beauty is the one great Truth in the lie of Life; for Life is a lie in its false hope. Truth is many. Her picture gleamed once in a mirror that fell to earth and was shattered to pieces. Many men have found many pieces—all differing in their suggestion of the whole. If Death be the only Truth and the soul of Beauty, then John Keats had solved the problem when he declared Truth and Beauty one. How like is Beauty in its dissemination over the world to the fable of Truth that I have paraphrased above. All behold some of it. None can see it all. Keats only did not go far enough. Truth and Beauty and Death are one. Strange he did not say it; but it seems to me that in no poet's life and poems is Death so intermingled as with the divine drunk on beauty which he enjoyed. Shelley, too, was enamored alike of Death and Beauty. Death, beautiful Death, benign Death, repaid them well. Another wooer of beauty, a poet, a soldier, a sailor, a pirate, a chum of Shakespeare, a lover of Elizabeth—Sir Walter Raleigh,—grasped this thought. Read his apostrophe to Death and feel Beauty breathing in the lines; and while you enjoy, regret that you cannot hear it read by Fred. Lehmann of St. Louis, on a Sunday afternoon a-swarm with melancholy bells.

If we come to realize the oneness of these—Truth, Love, Beauty, and Death—we shall see that they compose the Ideal, the ever-pursued, the various, the goal that is beyond each man's vision. We have seen that these

all are sought and are never reported found by credible seekers. Love looks beyond the grave. Truth is not here in toto. She must be there. As to Beauty, the word is the same. The Ideal is always just beyond. Of them all, it is singular; woman is the symbol. Of all, but one is ever attained—Death.

Love, Beauty, Truth, the Ideal are scattered through life and all the fragments are brought together in the great conclusion. There is but one road for man to travel. His goal must lie at the end of that road. The road is "the way to dusty death." There or beyond must be the Ideal—compact of Love and Trust and Beauty.

Death is the most beautiful woman in the world. We shall see her and she will wear an aspect of some one whom we now know.

* * *

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

I HAVE a copy of the *Mission Bulletin*, published at Atlanta, Ga., "under the auspices of the Young Men's Prayer Association," and edited by Rev. Fred. Warde, a Baptist preacher, who seems to have as much taste for the tragic as has his namesake of the sock and tin shield. In the issue at hand he gives a glowing account of supernatural occurrences which argue that we live in an age of miracles. One of these recitations runs as follows:

"When the Rev. Mr. Knapp, a regular Baptist minister, was holding a protracted meeting in Erie, he was interrupted by one Gifford, a Universalist preacher. Mr. Knapp felt his patience tried. At the conclusion of his sermon he prayed publicly that if said Gifford was within reach of salvation that God would have mercy upon him;

but if not that God would take away his speech, so that he might deceive the people no longer. And Mr. Gifford went out of the house a perfect mute, nor did he speak another word for more than four years. All physicians who examined him said there was no disease of the organs of speech. It was a direct visitation in answer to prayer. He went to New York, Boston, and other places, to consult the best physicians; but it was of no use."

It would appear from the foregoing that Baptist preachers are very dangerous people to trifle with; that, like Bro. Balaam, they keep the double-distilled curses of an accommodating Deity ever on tap, and knock off the perch of those dissenting polemics who chance to sprain their Christian patience. This is what might be called the sublimation of the *argumentum baculinum*, and when well applied to a troublesome opponent leaves nothing more to be said. In days of old the blessed Puritans, those lovers of religious liberty (for themselves) employed red-hot pincers and similar polemical paraphernalia in their discussions with dissenters. Like the modern Baptists, the old Puritans believed with all their hearts in the "toleration of tolerable opinions"; but considered a denial of their own particular dogma intolerable—that the offender "was sinning against conscience, and therefore it was not against the liberty of conscience to coerce him!" But while they attended to the conversion or suppression of the dissenter, we give the Lord a tip that he requires radical treatment. Thus does religion progress in obedience to the law of evolution. The worlding harnesses the elements and make them toil for him; but we Baptists compel Omnipotence to relieve us of the arduous duty of religious persecution. I think sometimes that we do not give the Deity enough to do—neglect to properly utilize our supernal "pull." With the power to strike men

dumb safely in our possession, it did not occur to us to make a bid for the Nation's gratitude by hermetically sealing the gab-traps of 'steen million political orators a few months previous to the late election. It was an inexcusable oversight.

As Gifford eventually regained his speech, we are left in doubt as to whether Bro. Knapp's heart got to hurting him so he voluntarily removed the sacred hoodoo, or the whole affair was an advertising fake cooked up by a brace of ministerial mountebanks. I have been hearing all my life of these "direct visitations in answer to prayer"; but as they always occur in unexpected localities, I have not yet succeeded in getting one cornered and subjecting it to a searching analysis. Among Baptists, Campbellites and Methodists—constituting what we may call the Emotional School—I frequently meet people who claim to have seen somebody else who saw some wonderful "manifestation," evidencing a direct interference by the Almighty with affairs mundane. These stories crop out occasionally in the sectarian press and are still retailed from the pulpit. If it can be demonstrated that any of them are really *true*, it should be an easy matter to silence all Doubting Thomases and "capture the world for Christ." In the face of such a cloud of witnesses—or rather in definance of the clamor of their dupes—to declare that such tales have absolutely no foundation in fact, were merely a waste of words. It were placing private—and perhaps worthless—opinion in opposition to evidence which millions accept as ample. While taking precious little stock in the miraculous, I freely concede that there may be more things in heaven and earth than I have dreamed of in my philosophy. A thing may be true though all the world dispute it, or false if everyone believe it. Solely in the interest of truth, I propose to make a

test of this "direct visitation in answer to prayer" hypothesis; to subject it to the *experimentum crucis*, that the fraud may be exposed if it is a fraud, and the fact forever established if it is a fact. To this end I ask the earnest co-operation of Christians of every sect who believe in the physical power of prayer—who hold that the plans of the Omnipotent ever were or ever will be altered one iota by the supplication of any mortal son of Adam's misery. I ask all such to pray earnestly, night and morning from now until February 1, next, that I will drop dead at exactly noon that day. No one need hesitate to prefer such a petition; for what is the brief terrestrial life of any one man compared with the salvation of millions. If your prayer is answered, atheism will be practically obliterated. The boldest would scarce dare listen to the sophistries of Ingersoll. The scoffer would fall upon his knees and confess the glory of God. Thousands of men and women who were better than I can ever hope to be, their lives more worth the living, have gladly died that others might believe, and inherit the joys of heaven; but never yet did the loss of a single life contribute so much to the propagation of the Christian faith as would my removal by the power of prayer in the very noonday of this Age of Denial. Nor is this all: The pulpiteers frequently accuse me of "poisoning the minds of the people." If this be true I richly deserve a speedy death. The people whom I am supposed to be leading to perdition are entitled to your kindly consideration. If you can save them by the simple expedient of praying me off the earth, were not your refusal to do so unchristian and unkind? If, like Universalist Gifford, I am "deceiving the people," it were in accord with Baptist predecent to relieve me of that baleful power.

It will, of course, be urged that in the foregoing I have

defied the Deity. If that indeed be true, will he not be the more inclined to remove me in response to the prayers of his devotees? I am not defying him; I long ago learned that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." Why should I defy the Deity? If he exists were I not an ass to challenge Omnipotence? If he be non-extant what man cares to make a spectacle of himself by shaking his puny hand at an empty heaven? I stake my earthly existence on the simple proposition that Infinite Wisdom will not suffer itself to be guided by finite folly. I do not defy the Deity, but I do defy the entire world to pray the nail off my little finger or hair on the palm of my hand. The assumption that Jehovah is kept on the jump—like a hen on a hot griddle—by petitions that he change his administrative policy, belittles and belies him, is either the folly of barbarism or deliberate blasphemy. The man who presumes to tender advice to Almighty God should be given a hot mush poultice for his gall. I am of the opinion that there are no "direct visitations in answer to prayer"; but were I King of Heaven something of the kind might happen occasionally. When a preacher asked me to strike one of his fellow mortals dumb for exercising the reason with which I had endowed him, I'd hit the billious-livered bigot so hard there'd be nothing left for Lucifer to levy on but a broken collar-button and a bad smell. While examining the myriads of worlds I had called out of the night of utter Nothingness, if I found a little two-legged animal, sans feathers, proclaiming that I had permitted him to blue-pencil my terrestrial manuscript, I'd take the ever-moaning sea in the hollow of my good right hand and give him a correct imitation of a cloud-burst toying with a tumble-bug. I think sometimes that it is just as well that I am running the ICONOCLAST instead of editing the universe. Being the meekest man since Moses'

journey to Nebo's lonely mount, I freely admit that the cosmos is, all things considered, managed as well as I could do it myself. That is why I never instruct the Deity in his duty, never meddle with his administration. "But" it may be asked, "should we not pray to the Giver of all Good?" That depends upon your definition of the word prayer. Certainly you should give thanks to God; for, however deplorable your condition, it is doubtless better than you deserve.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him ye creatures here below."

That's *all* right; but praise and petitions that he break the dread order of the universe for your especial accommodation are equines of different complexions. I should be shamed to worship a God whom I did not believe would always act for the best. I could feel only contempt for a Deity who permitted his plans to be altered by "pore mizabul worms of the dust." We too frequently forget to remember that there is considerable difference between Jehovah and a police court judge, between the imperial Court of Heaven and a Baptist conference.

* * *

SALMAGUNDI.

Some of Fort Worth's officials must have missed the "progress and prosperity" car and brought up in Poverty Alley, as they are evidently casting about for anything that carries with it the faintest prospect of a fee. These active limbs of the law recently arrested a Chinaman and a negress on a charge of having violated the anti-miscegenation law in getting married. Up to the time of going to press they had not pulled the jacks and

mares for breeding mules—perhaps because they have no money with which to discharge the costs of court. I do not know what disposition has been made of this *casus celebre*, my latest information being to the effect that the Mongolian and his dusky mate were languishing in the bat-cave in lieu of bond, with County Attorney Swayne and Justice Adams crying aloud for the enforcement of the law. Yet some bold bad men want the fee system abolished! Perish the thought! But for its encouragement of our officials to more than Argus-eyed vigilance we might not have suspected that the peace and dignity of the commonwealth were imperiled by the mating of an almond-eyed washerman with a wench! Justice Adams should fine both himself and the county attorney for contempt; not of the court,—for that appears to be beneath it—but of the offices with which they have been entrusted by a misguided people. The anti-miscegenation law is intended for the protection of the Caucasian, or superior race, against the evils of mongrelization such as befel the Spanish in Mexico—albeit I'm not sure but a cross between a lazy don and a lousy squaw would be an improvement on Weyler. The relative ethnological standing of Indians, Greasers, Niggers, Chinamen, Mugwumps and yaller dogs has never been definitely determined; hence no court of law is qualified to decide whether the wench or Mongol in this case has made a *misalliance*. The Chinaman and negress conceived a liking for each other and had the decency to enter wedlock. Had the latter opened a dive in the "acre" for the promiscuous entertainment of Celestials, she would have been charged with a misdemeanor instead of a felony by hungry officials on the scent of a fee. In the language of the dusky dame, "Dar's people in dis yar worl allers tendin to somebody else's business." And that's no lie.

The so-called failure of W. E. Dupree, the Waco implement man, seems to have been the most brazen attempt at a whole-sale steal in the history of th State; yet I am told that it is impossible to put him in the penitentiary. The meshes of our criminal code appear to be so curiously woven that the little fish are caught while the large ones escape. We incarcerate a half-wit coon for misappropriating a mangy mule, and permit a man to go unwhipped of justice who failed to steal the earth simply because he couldn't carry it. We have one law for the retail and another for the wholesale robber. We punish the tramp who obtains a loaf of bread or a bottle of booze on false pretenses, so jealous are we of property rights; then suffer to go scot free the merchant who secures possession of thousands of dollars' worth of property for which he does not expect to pay. Merchandise bought on time was being carried into Dupree's establishment while his attorney was making out the assignment papers and classifying the creditors in such a manner that the men of whom these goods were purchased could never hope to receive a penny. If that isn't grand larceny then there's something wrong with our lexicons. Dupree's chief clerk was named as trustee, and the whole affair so fixed that a few so-called "preferred creditors" would absorb the assets and leave the others to chew the fag-end of hope deferred. In order to get off with the largest possible amount of swag, heavy bills were made with the local merchants on the eve of the failure, and these accounts marked preferred. I cannot believe that these local merchants who extended such liberal credit to a man whom rumor had for a week classed as a potential bankrupt, stood in with Dupree's skullduggery, but it will be difficult to convince foreign creditors that their action was altogether above the board. I am free to confess that they have placed

themselves where they must choose "between dog and wolf"—between knave and fool; but I beg that Dupree's foreign creditors will think of them as kindly as they can. The scheme of despoilation miscarried to some extent, thanks to the prompt action of the Federal court, and Dupree will have to divide; but the affair will long leave a stain on the escutcheon of the State—will do much to revive that opinion, once so prevalent, that Texas is peopled chiefly by scoundrels from other states—who "left their country for their country's good."

. . .

Rev. W. B. Patterson, of Kaufman, gets full of the divine afflatus occasionally and flops over into song. The next time he feels a twinge of the *furor poeticus*, he should take a double dose of compound cathartic pills and reenforce it with a season of fasting and prayer.

. . .

The Republicans and their mugwump allies are quite indignant because the senate holds up the confirmation of Secretary Francis. There is no reason why Democrats in the senate should ever favor his confirmation. He does not belong to their party, albeit he had a narrow escape. He was preparing to take the stump for Bryan when headed-off by the President with a cabinet portfolio—a bribe for his political influence. Since then he has been playing the game of Mr. Facing-both-ways, holding with the hare and running with the hounds. He has slopped over the Democracy he deserted in the hope that confirmation would follow fawning. Francis is a smooth, nice gentleman to meet over wine and walnuts, but politically he is utterly and everlastingly n. g. He favors both gold and silver—wherever he can get it for Francis; but his convictions on the monetary question, in so far as they affect the nation, are as amorphous as those of

Major McKinley. Cleveland is appointing only gold men to office. Why should the Democracy turn the other cheek to the smiter and be smuck?

. . .

I had hitherto supposed that Hon. R. B. Hawley, congressman-elect from the Galveston district, was very much of a gentleman; but am compelled that evidence recently submitted makes very strong against that presumption. There is a disreuptable little sheet published somewhere in Galveston by a gang of niggers whose illiteracy is equalled only by their impudence. In November it printed a dirty diatribe against the street-car conductors of the Island Island because they were not in the habit of helping wenches on and off the cars. It alluded to them as "Irish snides, mangy apes, lousy puppies, pimps, beastly bastards," and added other reflections too foul for reproduction. The conductors being white men could not afford to dignify these filthy coons by killing them; but the grand jury took cognizance of the matter, and indicted the self-styled "editor" and *soidisant* "business manager" of the nigger-equality sheet. When they were arrested Congressman-elect Hawley became their bondsman. Of course, he is a Republican and was elected by nigger votes; but I submit that an alleged Caucasian who stands between the bat-cave and such coons as those under consideration should not be permitted to occupy a reserved seat in the lower court of hell, much less make laws for this country. His nigger proteges are unworthy a second thought by themselves considered; but what opinion must the world form of a man who takes the part of such cattle against his own race, because they have helped him to a seat in Congress? Does Col. Hawley aspire to be known on the floor of the House as a representative of the substratum of the impudent coon element?

. . .

My readers doubtless remember W. Goodrich Jones, the rolled-gold Endymion of Temple, Tex., who fell asleep in his hammock one moonlight night, was bussed on the bread-trap by chaste Dian and awoke with a case of the Willies. Of course, they remember him; for is he not the proud father of Texas forestry—a man in nowise to be forgotten? If not of the few, Jones is certainly one of "those immortal names that were not born to die." W. Goodrich has been guilty of an even graver inadvertence than sleeping in the open air with his mouth open, while the willisismus bacteria were abroad. He gave a stag party and allowed the pink lemonade to get inextricably mixed up with the oratory of the evening. One Philander Lackadaisical Downs, a confirmed nympholeptic—one of those fellows so peculiarly constituted that they cannot hear the swish of a chambermaid's petticoat on a clothes-line without getting sea-sick—succeeded in getting himself selected to respond to that time-worn toast at which every amateur windjammer has had a hack, "The Ladies." When he arose to work off his carefully conned impromptu typewritten enconium of the long-suffering sex, it was found that the liquid refreshment aforesaid had gotten in its insidious graft. That is the most charitable view of it, for I can scarce conceive of a sober man, capable of dodging the insane asylum and feeding his face with a knife and fork, standing up even at a stag-party and advertising himself as an ass. Of course, he may have become intoxicated on Ella Wheeler Wilcox's erotic poetry, for which he professes to have a penchant, or got a case of brain-fag by assiduous contemplation of his own personal pulchritude in an amorous looking-glass. As his oration appeared next day in a Temple paper, I presume that the stags couldn't stand it, but compromised the matter, as is often done in Congress, by giving him "leave to print." From the copy before me I learn that Philander

Lackadaisical Down just dotes on "mossy grass,"—whatever that may be—dark-eyed French debutantes and dizzy blondes who have learned to straddle a bike; that he declines to be "the priest of the rites and ceremonies of the Delphich oracle" (sic); that some miscreant has fallen into the bad habit of "hurling massive thunderbolts from the topmost heights of Mt. Pegasus," and that "bigotry sprung from the unfortunate connection of pants and skirts"—which latter let him deny who dares! I would not for the world discourage a budding Pat Donan or incipient Cicero; but suggest in all kindness that before turning his brilliant metaphors loose in the village papers, at regular advertising rates, he take them around to the blacksmith shop and have the rough edges rasped. It is safe to assume that the next time the Temple stags get together for a quiet poker game and surreptitious pull at a brown stone jug, lovely woman will not be mentioned. After the inimitable Downs has swooped from the "mossy grass," which is supposed to flourish in Jones' artificial forests, to "the topmost heights of Mt. Pegasus"—where ever that may be,—in search of flowers to lay beneath her feet; when he has painted the lily with a double-breasted kalsomine brush and gilded refined gold with flakes of his own transcendental gall, any further effort in that direction were simply sacrilege.

. . .

Waco has a "School Flag Association" which is preparing to make life a weariness to the incoming legislature with petitions that it place the banner of the free on all public school buildings, that the rising generation may learn what it looks like and our foreign population gaze upon it and be healed of their alien ideas—much as the snake bitten Israelites were by the sacred hoodoo raised up by Moses in the wilderness. As every lawfully-begot-

ten American kid inherits the idea that Uncle Sam owns the earth, and our foreign-born population—which amounts to less than 7 per cent—is already eminently patriotic, there is no imperative necessity for booming the late Ben Butler's bunting factory at the expense of the Texas taxpayers these hard times. The legislature should sit down on the Waco School Flag association with the ponderosity of Elephas Africanus taking a stale custard pie for a cushion. "The right of petition" is being sadly overworked. There is such a thing as a familiarity which breeds contempt, and I protest against making Old Glory too common. This school-house flag agitation is merely flapdoodle by atribilarious busy bodies who mistake the *furor petitio* for patriotism. The American flag, like the American female, should not flaunt itself in public until it becomes an eyesore. I beg to assure the School-flag association that the country is still safe, and that the sooner they subside the better for all concerned.

. . .

There is either a lunatic at large in Austin, Texas, or a knave who has managed in some mysterious manner to dodge the penitentiary. He, she, or it is sending circulars broadcast over the country, calling upon the people to rise and swipe out "Romanism." Following is an extract from the meretricious muck with which the Austin what-is-it is burthening Uncle Sam's mails:

"Romanism is the greatest curse on earth to mankind. She has murdered more people than there is on earth to day. From her earliest existence down to the present time, Her mission has been Intemperance, Immorality, Robbery, Mobs, Riots, Lynching, Assassination and Murder. Every American citizen men, women, boys and girls must wake up and be ready to meet this Hypocritical Bloody Monster with the means necessary to rout

her, foot, hoof, horse and dragoon, out the United States. THE SOLUTION: No Catholic immigration. The Catholic Stallions to leave the United States in ten days. Their concubines to be set free and reformed, their dens of iniquity, the convents, nunneries and houses of the Good Shepherds, to be destroyed."

The "Ape" is dead; hence the foregoing must be the malodor arising from its putrifying remains.

. . .

President Diaz, in taking the oath of office for his fourth consecutive term, declared that Mexico is prospering wonderfully under the silver standard and has too much business gumption to let go of a good thing. Foreign capital is pouring in, wages are rising, merchants are busy and jobs may be had for the asking. Same with us— I don't think! The difference between President Diaz and President Cleveland is that the former is a half-breed Indian with a large brain, the latter a thorough-bred ass with an enormous belly.

. . .

I gather from Beau Monde, of Dallas, that "Spencer Hutchins is to Houston and Galveston what Ward McAllister is to the Four Hundred of Gotham." Thank the Lord, the mystery is solved at last! I've looked at Hutchins a hundred times and wondered, in a vague, tired way, why the Almighty made him. Somehow he always suggested to me those lines,

"Some were made for great things,
And some were made for small,
And some, it is not recorded
Why they were made at all."

Just as I was beginning to doubt the Divine Wisdom I learn that nature never errs—that she intended Spencer

for the *Arbiter elegantiarum*, or lead gander of our coast country's intellectual geese. For millions of years she has been patiently evolving him from the primordial protoplasm that he might one day teach the incroyables of Galveston how to do the elegant, the society buds of Houston how to blossom. His arrival is opportune, for "functions" in the "h'upper sukkles" of the twin cities of South Texas is shockingly provincial. The belles do not even know what colors become their complexions, while the chappies turn up their twousahs too much or too little, and get 'way over on the haw side of *l'anglaise* in the matter of collars and cane. But now all this is to be changed; for Spencer knows his little biz—is "the swellest what they is"—and any Cuban insurgency against his social edicts will be Weylered by the Houston Light Guard, while Sessums plays on his snare-skin fiddle, "Hail! the conquering hero comes."

. . .

Gentle reader, did you ever receive a fat, stampless envelope, containing a printed copy of a speech supposed to have been delivered by the Hon. A.S.S. Ininity, M.C., in support of a bill appropriating 'steen million dollars for the extermination of sheep-ticks? Of course, you have; but did you reflect while contemplating the ponderous document that just such damnonsense is making a hole as big as a skinned horse in the available assets of Uncle Sam? Perhaps it never occurred to you that the average Congressman costs this country some $15,000 per annum, exclusive of the incidental damage he does. His franking privilege alone means an annual expense of $5,000 to the public. During the year ending Nov. 30, 18 per cent of all mail matter was privileged matter and paid no postage. This franked matter weighed nearly 95 million pounds avoirdupois. As it constituted 18 per cent of all mail

handled it was responsible for 18 per cent of the expense of the postal department. I disremember the exact cost of Uncle Sam's mail service for the last fiscal year; but it was considerably in excess of that for 1893, which was, approximately, 81 millions. Take 18 per cent even of that sum and you get an idea of what the franking privilege is costing the people. Granting that half of it was incurred by other departments of government (a too liberal estimate) and dividing the remainder by the number of senators and representatives, we find that their franking privilege cost the government a sum almost equal to their salaries. Add to this clerk hire, mileage, and the tons of useless seeds purchased at public expense and distributed gratis—not to enrich the country, but to stifle the ever-budding crops of incipient congressmen and enable those in power to hold their places—and you will find that the average federal legislator is an expensive luxury. Millions of copies of "speeches" that were never delivered on the floor of either house, or anywhere else, are distributed at public cost, as partisan campaign documents. The people are being systematically "worked" by their own hired-hands. The franking privilege is an infernal fraud; but so long as Uncle Sam does not demand its revocation he deserves to have his leg elongated. Fifty dollars per annum would cover the postage of all correspondence a Congressman is like to have on matters of importance to either his immediate constituents or the general public.

. . .

The Iconoclast suggests that when Columbia is relieved of the damning disgrace of being misrepresented by an Anglo-maniacal toady and professional lick-spittle at the court of St. James, the American people observe another day of thanksgiving. Never in the history of this

nation was one of its accredited representatives regarded with such universal contempt. Lacking sufficient self-respect to resign when censured by congress for slandering his country, he continued to drule and drivel on John Bull until his slobber disgusted even the object of his hysterical adoration, and he became the butt of the press and diplomats of all Europe. Recently an attempt was made to raise by popular subscription the price of "a national Christmas present" as a grateful acknowledgement by England of Bayard's Benedict Arnoldism; but the people declined to pay costly compliments to a creature for whom they felt only contempt. After the enterprise had proven a flat failure, and even the London press was lampooning Bayard because of his utter lack of diplomatic decency, he suddenly discovered that the constitution of this country prohibits our representatives accepting presents from foreign powers, and he was compelled to go through the formality of declining a gratuity which the English people had peremptorily refused to provide. That's the kind of pot-metal hair-pin this country is paying $17,500 per annum as ambassador to the court of its ancient enemy. As it is a world-wide custom to judge a people by those occupying positions of trust, we can scarce blame our "British cousins" for regarding us with contempt.

. . .

The German emperor seems to entertain the idea that his soldiers, drunk or sober, are superior beings, to whom civilization should make low obeisance on pain of disembowelment. It is just such flamboyant flapdoodle as that recently indulged in by this empty-headed Hohenzollern that is breeding anarchists in Europe. "Willie of Germany" was often cited during the recent campaign to demonstrate the danger of making another "Willie" of

equal age chief magistrate of the greatest nation in the world; but it might have been retorted that should the Emperor live to be older than Methusaleh, he could never hope to rise far above the intellectual altitude of an idiot. The Hohenzollern family was once of average intellect; but private diseases and the bad practice of intermarrying with other royal families, regardless of the breed, has reduced it to a state of mental degeneracy that makes it a disgrace to Germany, that land of intellectual giants. Think of Bismark being the subject of "Litle Billee"! But so wags the world. Gladstone "obeys" an old woman whose chief distinction is a crop of worthless brats and a thirst for small beer, while Tolstoi the Titan bends the knee to a mental homunculus. But perhaps we should not have too much to say. We are about to replace a pudding-headed president with one whose cerebrum is full of sawdust.

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Lee J. Rountree, or Roundtree, of somewhere in Southwest Texas, is a candidate for the chief clerkship of the Texas House of Representatives. There is nothing like hitching your chariot to a star, even if you get stung. Lee is probably asking largely in the humble hope of catching a portership—being made keeper of the privy keys or master of the cuspidores. Rountree is one of those impudent young puppies who, as reward for their dirty work during a political campaign, are usually permitted to lick the pots.

. . .

The great-grand-daughter of Benjamin Franklin was refused membership in a swell association some time ago on the ground that her illustrious ancestor "was not a gentleman but a tradesman." A "gentleman" or "lady," in the more or less valuable opinion of these immaculate

idiots, is a person of wealth whose ancestors did not work. They claim to be ladies and gentlemen; ergo, they are the lineal descendants of that pair of simians which God created when he made Adam and Eve to be our ancestors. They were perfectly correct in deciding that the descendants of old Ben. Franklin did not belong in a "set" whose "genealogical tree" is full of cocoa-nuts. When they get to heaven they will refuse to associate with Jesus Christ because he was a carpenter, and turn up their patrician proboscides at Almighty God for having once worked in mud. "The more fools the more fun."

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An Oklahomian anxiously asks: Is there any way by which Rev. Sam Small can be made to repay borrowed money?" None that I know of. He is so devoid of shame as to care absolutely nothing for exposure, and judgments against him are quoted at 101 below par. If my correspondent could corner Sam with a stiff hickory club he might prevail upon him to discharge an honest debt; but the chances are that the modern Pecksniff would float out of the difficulty on a stream of penitential tears, tell an audience the same evening that he was being persecuted by the people of the rum power for Christ's sake, then take up a collection.

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Dr. Jameson, "detained" as a political prisoner for having attempted the subversion of a friendly power, has been permitted by England to leave his sumptuous quarters, because, forsooth, he did not enjoy his four square meals per diem; but those other political prisoners, the so-called Irish dynamiters, are still dragging out a dog's life in John Bull's dungeons. A Jesse James' raid on a little republic, causing the loss of many lives and compro-

mising the honor of an empire, is but a venial fault; but a suggestion that England's damnable despoilation of Ireland should be checked by force, is the chief of crimes. Had Jameson led the same gang of cut-throats into British territory for the purpose of wrenching it from the crown, he would have been hanged higher than Haman.

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William C. Whitney, of Standard Oil fame and erts-while member of Cleveland's cabinet, has provided his son Harry, recently wedded, with three costly homes. A society journal says: "Mr. Harry Payne Whitney is still very young but has already distinguished himself. He is a most expert golf player." So glad, doncherknow! Some miserable dunderheads must toil half a century before they become distinguished; but Harry found it dead easy to wreathe his massy brow with immortelles! Three palatial mansions for a young dude, who never added a dollar to the wealth of the world! Yet people laugh at the old black auntie for saying that we can see how little the Almighty thinks of money by the kind of cattle he gives it to.

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Somehow the violent moral spasm which has seized upon the constabulary of Grayson County, Texas, reminds me of a similar exhibition of official zeal that once occurred at Des-Moines, Iowa. When the Prohibition law went into effect in the latter state, Constable Frank Pierce and a number of others organized themselves into a committee of persecution and profit. For a period of three years they made the justice courts of Des Moines yield them some $60,000 per annum. Blackmail and bribe-making constituted a side-line of the officio-moral organization, and murder was finally added as incidental annex. Exposure followed, and Pierce and some of his co-laborers

in the Prohibition vineyard went to the pen. I do not know why the crusade at Sherman should remind of that at DesMoines, but it does.

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An Austin correspondent calls my attention to the ladies who occupy the foreground in Uncle Sam's new $5 silver certificate, and suggests that their somewhat liberal display of beauty unadorned does not comport with the American idea of modesty. I had formed a passing acquaintance with the spectral female who, squatted on an inverted wash-tub, and holding aloft a crumpled night-cap, adorns the old-fashioned dime. I had caught occasional glimpses of the angry amazon who glares and grieves from the subsequent side of the 16 to 1 dollar, but had not hitherto observed the classical beauts of the new $5 bill. Despite the adverse criticism of my correspondent, I find the *tout ensemble*—whatever that may be—not altogether displeasing; albeit I cannot but wonder what it's all about. It is perhaps an allegory that was picked before it was ripe, or the incoherent pipe-dream of an artist in whose befuddled brain legs and lightning became inextricably entangled with the silver question. Two ladies and the American Eagle are bundled together on the rolling earth, in the immediate vicinity of Baffin's Bay. The bird o' freedom wears a fine crop of winter feathers, but the impedimenta of his companions is decidedly summery. One is attired chiefly in a pair of wide-spreading wings and holds aloft an electric-light to illume her shape; the other sports the fag-end of a mosquito-bar cut decollete at both ends, and blows spit-balls through a putty-blower at Col. Morgan's elegant signature, while the eagle notes the effect of her aim. To the left of the group a wingless female is floating in the atmosphere. She is attired in a wet sheet whose clinging folds suggest a symphony of voluptuous legs, and is waving her arms

like an angry house-wife heaving a red brick at a yaller hen. On the right a gentleman, whom I take to be W. J. Bryan attired in a Roman toga, is astride a Nebraska zephyr and driving before him a herd of unbroken bronchos with a double-breasted thunder-bolt. He is looking toward the National Capital but is driving in the opposite direction. While I do not particularly object to pictures of women—with wings or without—who have "nothing to wear," I would prefer to see our currency illustration running more to American history and less to mythical legs.

* * *

EDITORIAL ETCHINGS.

At this writing the plutonian revel of rapine, murder and outrage, miscalled war, continues in Cuba; and the same American president who strove to reinstate a saddle-colored harlot as sovereign of white people in Hawaii twiddles his thumbs and vaguely hints that, when Spanish hirelings can find no more women to debauch, no more wounded men to butcher and no more homes to burn, Uncle Sam will hold an inquest on the ghastly hecatomb, administer upon the smouldering sepulchre. Although the Cuban patriots have so long withstood the petty power of the House of Bourbon, he declines to accord them the rights of belligerents. Because it has no marble capitol, mugwump cabinet and bond sales at private bids he refuses to recognize the Cuban Republic. Its government—as that of England has so often been—is in the saddle, its sceptre the commandant's sword. I presume that Cleveland and his secretary—or clerk—of state would not have recognized the Empire of the French

because Napoleon was in the field; not the Kingdom of Prussia because wherever the warlike Frederick pitched his tent there was the nation's capital. When Nicholas II goes visiting his brother nobs and Russian government at home becomes "a mere will-o'-wisp, here to-day and gone to-morrow," hence Cleveland should recall our minister. As chief executive of a nation posing before the world as "the champion of liberty," Cleveland will not so much as extend moral support to men fighting at our very doors for the blessed boon of freedom. Government cruisers patrol our coast to prevent Americans doing for the Cubans what brave foreigners did for us when in revolt against a milder despotism—to imprison the Tom Paines who cry, "Where liberty is *not*, there is my country!" International comity, we are told, demands that we stand with folded hands and see a war of extermination waged upon a chivalric people for no other crime than following the example of our fathers and declaring the truth to be self-evident that all men are created free and equal. But perhaps we should not criticise President Cleveland. To a porcine intellect it may appear eminently proper that Weyler should make a charnel-house of Cuba if its wretched inhabitants decline to be further robbed, because four centuries ago the island was discovered by an Italian adventurer while flying the Spanish flag. We cannot transform a porker into a philosopher by calling it Plato, nor make a statesman of a tub of offal by electing it president. The fault is with the people, who set aside those brainy patriots, Blaine and Ben. Harrison, for this physical Daniel Lambert, moral degenerate and intellectual abnormality. And here we are—up to the belt in the financial bogs, holding the hot end of a new treaty with our ancient enemy, hoodooed by Mark Hanna and conniving at the Spanish

atrocities in Cuba! We richly deserve our distress and dishonor, for it is written. "The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools." We could scarce expect a man who employed a substitute in war and a Bayard in peace to have aught in common with those who consecrate their lives and fortunes to the cause of freedom; but it doth amaze me much to see Americans boasting a Revolutionary ancestry espousing the cause of the oppressor. One can scarce pick up a daily paper without finding some stall-fed burro of the W. C. Moore breed referring to the Cuban insurgents as "foot-racers"; yet that is what the British called Washington and Greene, was the term applied to Sumpter and Marion by Col. Tarleton. The Cubans are fighting their oppressors exactly as we fought ours. Not strong enough to meet the enemy in a pitched battle, they must wear him out with marches and counter marches, with feints and forays, and retreat when need be to pathless swamps and mountain fastnesses. The Cubans are fighting the Spanish soldiery much as the Parthian cavalry did the legions of Rome, and apparently with the same effect. By Fabian tactics rather than by force of arms we won our freedom. We are accustomed to think of Washington as playing Samson to Britain's king of beasts; but he did nothing of the kind. He made the brute wear its feet to a frazzle in an effort to flesh its fangs. Instead of tearing its jaws apart he tied knots to its tail. He boldly attacked and clubbed it when able; but from start to finish the Revolution may be classed as "a running fight." That Americans should declare against Cuban autonomy because her people "are not qualified for self-government," is most remarkable. That was what the royalists said of the American rebels. It has been the dishonest plea of tyrants and their apologists and parasites wherever

and whenever a people has revolted against the monstrous doctrine of divine right. How many centuries of Spanish misrule will it require to qualify the Cubans for the task of constructing an Utopia in which McKinleys will ever reign and progress and prosperity never end? How long will it require for men like Weyler to teach them mercy? And who is to determine when, under the tuition of cruel Bourbons, they have attained to the nine beatitudes and may be trusted to paddle their own canoe? This class of dunderheads is not peculiar to our day. More than seventy years ago Macaulay said: "Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free until they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water until he had learnt to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever."

. . .

It is said that some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have it druv into 'em with a maul. Roger A. Pryor, of the supreme court of New York, has achieved greatness. By one herculean effort he became even a greater ass than the Russian emperor. He refused a certificate of incorporation to a Hebrew religious society because it proposed to hold its annual meetings on Sunday. He said: "A thing may be lawful, and yet not be laudable. As justice of the supreme court, I may not approve that which the uniform policy of the state condemns." In the name of all the gods at once, who made Roger A. Pryor religious censor of the state of New York? When did it become "the uniform policy" of any American state to condemn the meeting of religious societies on Sunday? And how are we to know that

a state uniformly condemns what it does not prohibit? Are not all churches and Sunday-schools religious societies?—many of them incorporated as such? If the descendants of Abraham are permitted neither to work, worship nor seek divertisement on Sunday, what in the devil's name are they to do on that day? Having stolen their Deity, desecrated their Sabbath and deprived them of their civic rights one day in seven, shall we now add insult to injury? Pryor seems to have just discovered that the Jews were *particeps criminis* in the crucifixion of Christ, and I can but wonder he doesn't have 'em all indicted. He should at least ask Brother Platt's legislature to enact a law of expulsion. If the New York Jews should catch Justice Pryor and Judge Hilton and circumcise 'em with an oyster shell it might induce some healthy reflection on the latter end of religious fools. According to Justice Pryor himself the act would be justifiable; for if the Jews be not permitted to do a lawful act which is not laudable, it follows as an illative consequence that they may do a laudable act which is not lawful.

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John Temple Graves is quoted as saying that "Georgia has a dozen greater orators that W. J. Bryan." The three-decker cognomen of this oratorical tribunal got, in some manner, confused in my mind with Henry Clay Gray, —I believe that's his name—the colored talkster of some small town in Texas. I humbly beg Gray's pardon for this unwitting injustice. He is a negro, 'tis true, and too much inclined to discuss matters anent which he knows nothing; but while an ignoramus he's not altogether an idiot. There's where Gray has the advantage of Graves, whom I now recall as the party to whom I'm indebted for the most miserable hour of my existence. By advertising himself as "the eloquent successor of Henry Grady," he

buncoed me—and about sixteen other suckers—out of a simoleon. I sat his lecture through, although the door was not locked. Having, like Tom Sawyer's cat, asked for pain-killer, I felt that I deserved my punishment. I remembered that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and refrained from throwing a cuspidore at "Grady's successor" lest I defeat the plans of Providence. What Graves seems to need is a powerful astringent for his mouth and a gentle cathartic for his mind. He should study mannerism less and maieutics more. By memorizing trifles and repeating them by rote he reminds his auditors of the parrot that "talked too d—n much." He is about as magnetiferous as a paper-mache man. With his looking-glass grimaces and cold storage climaxes, he is a weariness to the eye, an offense to the ear, an insult to the intelligence. If Georgia has eleven more like him there should be a clause in the federal constitution compelling her to keep their alleged oratory for home consumption—else label it oleomargarine when put on the general market. Of living Georgians I can think of but one—Gordon—who occupies even an humble place among the nation's orators. Sam Jones is best known of the present crop of Georgia wind-jammers; but he owes little of his popularity to oratorical powers. He is simply an entertainer, a ministerial monkey who substitutes bald assertion for argument and low comedy for logic. To those with "faculties proportioned to the bawl of Bellas" Jones doubtless appears a rhetorical giant. His brutal attacks upon those who dare deny his doctrines find a responsive echo in the hearts of people who have "just religion enough to persecute," and are vigorously applauded by stupid blockheads, who "mistake the venom of his shaft for the vigor of his bow."

* * *

Of Mr. Bryan's ability as an orator I may have somewhat to say hereafter; at this time I simply desire to express regret that he has seen fit to go upon the lecture platform, to afford ground for the complaint that he is trading upon the honor conferred by the Chicago convention. A successful lecturer—a man who has something important to say and can say it in a manner to interest his auditors—is deserving of praise; but none realize better than does Mr. Bryan that it is not his great abilities as a speaker or entertainer that pack his halls to suffocation and deluge the box-office with dollars. We had every reason to be proud of him during the campaign; but his present conduct is a disappointment. There is every probability that the Democrats and Populists will, four years hence, form a close alliance against the common enemy. Occupying, as he does, a middle ground between these parties, Mr. Bryan would be their logical candidate; but can they afford to entrust their banner to a man so ready to wring commercial victory from political defeat? There is a strong Pecksniffian flavor to Mr. Bryan's pretension that his lecture tour is in the interest of monetary education. The masses cannot afford to pay the tuition fees. Those who do drop a dollar in the slot to get a little information are treated by the distinguished professor to a cold rehash of campaign platitudes. Even Mark Hanna would do the "Excelsior" act for a thousand gold-standard dollars per day. Mr. Harrison is probably as able—if not so flowery—an orator as Mr. Bryan, and when defeated was beset by the same shameless gang of boodle grafters with lecture offers; but he declined to set a price on his political popularity. Of course, Mr. Bryan was more strongly tempted. He was poor in purse. He had been suddenly elevated not only to national leadership, but to a place—in public estimation at least—beside Demosthenes and

Cicero. Nothing is so intoxicating to a young man as the applause of the multitude. Horace declares the charm of fame consists "in being pointed at with the finger and having it said, This is he!" Mr. Bryan evidently found it so, and could not retire for a season from public scrutiny —could not give o'er the obsequious committee, the flattering reception, the taffy and toadyism and tuft-hunters and betake himself to the humdrum of his obscure editorship and provincial law practice. While not nearly so culpable as McKinley, who sold himself to a presidential syndicate, Mr. Bryan's course will because more public, have a worse effect on his political future. If I know aught of the American people he will never be president. Wealth and Fame were placed before him, and he rejected the offering of Minerva for that of Juno. He may for a few months "draw the rabble after him as a monster makes a show"; but "the flaming patriot who so lately scorched us in the meridan" will soon "sink temperately to the west" and be forgotten.

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It seems to me that the unco guid people of this glorious country are making a great deal of unnecessary noise over the recent escapade of a lot of gay young Gothamites. A Mr. Seeley, nephew of the late P. T. Barnum—whose millions he is blowing in—gave a farewell dinner to his brother, who was about to commit matrimony. It was a stag party, a bachelor's goodbye, and at such "functions" the fun is apt to grow fast and furious. Mr. Seeley seems to have determined to reconcile his brother to the life of a benedict by disgusting him with that of bachelordom. When the wine grew crimson in the cup and began to hump itself like a bucking broncho; when

"Him who instructs the sons of earth
To thrid the tangled dance of mirth"

has assumed the sceptre, a number of variety actresses were introduced who amused the tipsy bacchanals with specialties full as *risque* as the leg auctions, kiss sales and high kicking resorted to by certain churches to raise cash " for Christ." From all accounts these performances were almost as salacious as those witnessed once up a time by Dr. Parkhurst and his young Christian helpers in the Tenderloin; albeit it has not developed that Mr. Seeley and his guests imitated the good doctor's bad example by taking the naked wantons on their knees and helping them unload sundry schooners of beer. Both young Mr. Seeley and old Dr. Parkhurst hired dissolute women to dance the can-can and couchee-couchee; but only the latter was depraved enough to " peach " on those he had paid to violate the canons of decency, to turn his copartners in wanton worship of Venus Pandemos over to the police. Mr. Seeley's party was shockingly naughty and not at all nice. Still it is a comfort to reflect that the male revelers were not heads of families and that they made no pretensions to piety; that their female companions were professional panders to the animalistic—many of whom may have been driven to their bad occupations to provide bread for their dependants—and not society dames of high degree. Neither Margery, Moll nor Meg appears to have been sent home in a closed hack, with some lusty squire o' dames to hold her head. Doubtless the bacchantes should have been thrown into the bat-cave for disorderly conduct, and the variety artists vagged; still escapades equally as bad by people of greater pretensions to respectability have failed to either alarm the police or arouse the pulpiteers. If the top-dressing of Waco's social custard, the very meringue of morality, will sometimes

"Let me the canakin clink, clink,
And let me the canakin clink!"

until it is thought advisable to bribe the bottle-openers to keep mum, what can we expect of the dizzy young bachelors of modern Babylon? When Mrs. Freddy Gebhardt got "fuller'n a goat" at a swell feed and waded through the tanks in Baltimore's public parks, calling to a gang of drunken dudes, "Follow me if you love me," the super-sanctified did not arise in their wrath. Mr. Seeley and his guests were evidently in for what they considered a "good time"; and it were much better that their companions in the debauch should be "Little Egypts" than women who "move in select society," and whose morals are copied as well as their clothes. I have no apology to make for these young men; still, many a staid old citizen who is the pride of his ward, and perchance the main pillar of his church, might, with a little effort, recall something similar that happened in auld lang syne. Are they the worse for it? *Quien sabe?* The good man cautions his son against such excesses, and 'tis well; but at the same time there is a not altogether unpleasant remembrance in the good man's head of days long dead, when with Tom, Dick and Harry for boon companions, he was a pace-setter for the devil—sowing a crop of wild oats with what seemed celestial seed. And now those "good fellows" have gone to their long home,—wherever that may be—else, grown grizzly and sedate like himself, frown upon youth's follies while thinking with a little guilty sigh of the dancing lights and wassail song, the laughter and the repartee, the melody to those voluptous cadences

"Some airy nymph with fluent limbs
Through the dance luxuriant swims."

What a wild chase Tithonus would have led Aurora had he remained ever young! As age creeps on we can all cry with Solomon, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love."

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"Temperance Columns" can now be found in most newspapers—invariably edited by professional Prohibitionists. I file a protest—insist that these *soi-disant* reformers do their fighting under their own flag. Temperance is moderation in the indulgence of the passions and appetites; hence celibacy and teetotalism are intemperance. We who take science and St. Paul for our guides—who occupy middle ground between the intemperance of excessive indulgence and the intemperance of total abstinence—are alone entitled to be called temperate. St. Paul advised aged women to be "not given to much wine"; but the good old ladies who edit so-called "Temperance Columns" have evidently forgotten an important part of his exortation. He cautioned them not to become "false accusers"; yet I frequently find them making such statements as the following: "Four out of every five crimes can be traced directly to strong drink." "Sixty thousand Americans go down to hell annually, dragged thither by the demon drink." Now the demon drink is doubtless a villain; but we should give even the devil his due. Nowhere in the Scriptures do I find license to lie about even Lucifer; hence if he have but one barb on his tail and we affirm that he has ten, are we not in danger of hell fire? I have frequently offered to defray the expense of submitting the criminal question to all the judges and sheriffs in Texas, if the Prohibs would agree to acknowledge their error and refrain from further falsehood in case a majority of these officials decided that *not one felony in five* could be "traced directly to strong

drink." No doubt 60,000 Americans go to hell every year, and quite deservedly too, for that many Republicans die; but, according to the U. S. census reports, only about 2,000 deaths can be annually passed to the account of the "Rum Demon." More than that many people are killed by pneumonia—contracted while keeping their mouths open on subjects anent which they know nothing.

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"Oofty Goofty" has succeeded in devouring 30 quail in 30 consecutive days, and the Dallas *News* has afflicted its readers with 30 columns of minion about this alleged gastronomic miracle. It is a feat that has been performed by human ostriches a hundred times; but our contemporary has been too busy licking the boots of John Bull and apologizing for Weyler's butcheries of the wives and children of Cuban patriots to keep pace with the procession. A plump bob white on toast, flanked by a cold bottle of burgundy, is not at all bad, but a trifle too "fillin'" for an every-day dinner. Still, had not Moses—or some other Munchausen—given us that remarkable quail story in the book of Numbers, the world would probably not have suspected it any particular hardship for a healthy man to put 30 quail under his belt in a calendar month. There is a curious difference in the two Biblical accounts of the celestial commissary. In Exodus God promises to give the wandering Israelites flesh for supper and bread for breakfast. He begins by serving them with manna and quail at the same time. They feasted on the former for 40 years and seem to have fattened. There is no hint that during these years the supply of quail ran short, that the Lord defaulted on one-half his contract, or that his boarders clamored for anything better. Like the menu of the average hotel, it seems to have been "the same yesterday, to-day and

forever." According to *Numbers*, the Israelites were sick of manna before they saw a quail, and were raising one of their frequent roars. They berated old Moses for not giving them meat. They were dead tired of Kansas and wanted to come back to Texas. They yearned to revel in raw onions, carve the early watermillyon and catch the cucumber colic. They even " fell a lusting " for garlic and leeks, which argues either that the celestial table-board was very bad or their taste most abominable. " Now Moses was the meekest man in all the earth," but even the meekest man can't stand everything. He put himself in telephatic communication with the Lord and informed him that the people demanded less angel-food and more flesh. He also deposed that he was tired of the prophet business and asked to be excused long enough to get comfortably buried. The Lord waxed wroth because the people clamored for pie, and declared that he would fill them so full of the fat of the land that the luxury would become loathesome to them—that he would make them do the Oofty Goofty act, or words to that effect. " And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea (which sea), and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth." A pile of quail some fifty miles square and more than 3 feet high is a better record than Col. Bill Stallworth, of Rosebud, and Albert Steves, of San Antonio, discount it after a hunt, and they be honorable men. As the quail came " from the sea " they were doubtless web-footed, and may have been the result of a nocturnal raid on Col. W. L. Moody's " rice-farm." If God's chosen people undertook to eat them all I don't wonder they got the dyspepsia. The next verse recites that the Israelites

gathered quail for two days and a night, bagging about 66 bushels apiece, and "spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp." This would indicate that the rainfall of quail was not quite so heavy as the original estimate; yet an average of 66 bushels of quail for 3,000,000 people is a reasonably good record. While the Lord promised to stuff the rebellious and stiff-necked generation of Jews so full of quail in a month that they could taste feathers all the rest of their lives, there is not the slightest evidence that he kept to his contract. Naturally, after harvesting their wind-fall, the people prepared for a feast; but "while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote them with a very great plague." In the Psalms of David the quail story is repeated substantially as in *Numbers*. The son of Jesse had not heard that his ancestors were Oofty Gooftied. In both accounts the Israelites came to grief before getting outside a single bird. The fact that "Oofty" ate three quails on the thirtieth day, while his contract called for but one, indicates that he was a hungry man who worked the gullible Dallasites for free grub, much as a dead-broke newspaper man once did certain bad cowboys for booze—swore they couldn't make him drink, just to get a pint of dope poured down him.

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The sectarian press recently jabbed its goosequills into the shrinking diaphragm of Master Workman Sovereign until he looked like a "fretful porcupine," for saying that the clergy is not in sympathy with the workingman. While it is true that a considerable proportion of our preachers are but apologists for Dives and panders to his impudence, there still be many who sympathize deeply with the woes of the wage-worker and strive with

all their strength to make his burthen easier to be bore. To such be all honor; may their tribe increase. Mr. Sovereign has doubtless been misled by such exhibitions of Pharisaism as that recently afforded by the Ministers' Alliance of Kansas City, which declined to adopt a resolution asking the merchants, manufacturers and municipality to furnish all the employment possible, and thus mitigate, to some extent, the unusual distress prevailing among the working people. The resolution was introduced by Rev. Chas. L. Kloss, who detailed how he "stood in the lines of men making application for employment" at the packing-houses, railway offices and elsewhere, and saw them turned away in thousands. Rev. Mr. Johnston opposed the resolution, declaring the labor unions responsible for the lack of employment. "If it were not for the unions," he said, "wages might be lower, but there would be more jobs. "Union labor,," he declared, "is against the unemployed." Rev. Mr. Kloss—who seems to be a man of both *soul* and *sense*—assured the Alliance that he had heard men "begging, in the name of God, for employment at any pay to earn food for their families;" but the Johnston theory seems to have prevailed with the preachers—indicating their utter disregard of the Solomonic adjuration, "with all thy getting, get understanding." Just why a railway company would employ more men than necessary to its carrying trade, a merchant more clerks than needed to serve his customers, the farmer more laborers than he could utilize in his fields were the wage rate halved, Brer. Johnston failed to inform us. Labor organizations do not constitute a panacea for every industrial ill; but they do, in many instances, act as an emollient. They maintain wages above the starvation point in special lines and at particular places, and thereby prevent large additions

to the army of paupers and criminals; but do not decrease the aggregate of opportunities. They have, in fact, increased them by enchancing the cumulative purchasing power of labor and thereby stimulating production. Labor organizations make for the more equitable distribution of wealth—for the elimination of idle millionaires and helpless mendicants. "The rich man's wealth is his strong city," and the labor union is a barricade behind which the toiler takes his stand and gives desperate battle to those mighty forces that are crushing out the last vestige of industrial freedom. Upon this flimsy fortress all the powers of the plutocracy, all the demigods of greed, all the industrial cannibals beat night and day, and that they are gaining ground is amply evidenced by the prayers of men with starving families for employment *at any pay.* If Brer. Johnston finds Quesnay and Mill too weighty for his mental digestive apparatus, he might absorb the fundamentals of political economy from Mrs. Marcet's little dialogues. Revs. F. R. Hill, W. A. Quayle and Henry Hopkins all attacked the resolution. The latter won great applause by suggesting that if the city were asked to furnish employment for so many of the destitute as possible it would next have to provide them with a free circus. Whether Rev. Henry Hopkins be a brute-beast whom crassness renders indifferent to human suffering, or simply a natural-born damphool, I leave for the reader to determine. It is true that paternalism is not the key-stone of this government; but I scarce expected to see the accredited representatives of Christ—who made the poor his especial care— proclaiming the pornic doctrine of "root hog or die." If organized society owes nothing to the idle legions of labor, it certainly owes something to itself. We maintain public schools as a safeguard against the evils of ignorance and fill the

land with peace officers to protect our lives and property; we build prisons for our criminals and poor-houses for our paupers; yet we say to six or seven million idle wage-workers and their dependents, "Go to; the government is under no obligation to provide you with employment." Certainly it is not, but from the womb of Want spring Anarchy and Crime, and with these we have some concern. Have not the preachers long been proclaiming "a wider dissemination of the spirit of Christ" as a cure for all our ills? And were it not consonant with that spirit to ask cities and individuals contemplating improvements to have the work done *now*, when so many stand shivering in their rags and wretchedness, and must either be employed or become in some manner a public charge? Might it not be cheaper to give a man a day's work, even tho' it profited the employer little, than to imprison him for theft or hang him for homicide? As for free circuses, certainly there can be need of none in Kansas City while the Ministers' Alliance continues to discuss economics. I suggest that these reverend gentlemen make a personal test of their theory anent labor unions before assuming that they are the people and that wisdom will die with them. Let them accept one-half their present comfortable salaries and see if Kansas City will double the number of her dominies. Certainly these men of God would not recommend to others a sacrifice from which they shrink themselves! Where shall we turn for exemplars if not to our ministers? Give us some evidence of your inward grace. Prove that you possess the courage of your convictions, and thereby save the Recording Angel the trouble of writing you down as an aggregation of muddy-brained blatherskites and canting hypocrites.

It were much better to foster honesty and independence thro' opportunity for employment, than pauperism

by alms and crime by neglect. The fact that such conditions as those now prevailing should be unknown in this half-developed country is quite true; but the stubborn fact confronts us. Granting that this or the other economic theory adopted by the government would create a song in every heart and a smoke in every chimney; the hungry man cannot wait four—or forty—years until this or that blessed campaign of education be brought to a successful climax. In the meantime, what shall we do with him? What can we do with him but extend employment in all possible directions—if not for his good, then for our own protection?—for it is true now as when the Proverbs were written, that "Men do not despise a thief, if he steals to satisfy his soul when he is hungry."

I am not of those who charge the present business depression altogether to McKinley's election. Partisan politics has not as yet proven potent in solving industrial problems. There is something radically wrong with our industrial system—an evil with which neither Republicanism nor Democracy has yet had the courage to deal. Backed by a congress in sympathy with his views, Mr. Bryan could have reformed the tariff and currency and knocked a few holes in the trusts; but our history for the past half century should teach us—unless we have passed that point where the school of experience is potent—that even with free silver, governmental economy, a purely revenue tariff and abundant crops, panics and periods of industrial stagnation are possible; that "progress and prosperity" may be enjoyed despite a depreciated paper currency, a war-tariff, governmental jobbery and a bonded indebtedness of two billions. By all means let us have the reforms proposed in the Chicago platform, and that as quickly as possible; but let us not forget that this notion increased in wealth from 7 to 65 billions in

40 years, and that despite all kinds of legislation and one of the most destructive wars known to human history. Does not this argue that the grievous poverty of the working-class—the people who brought these 65 billions of wealth into being—is due to something which no tariff or currency can cause or cure? Is it not patent that there is something wrong with a system that compels a hundred men to stand idle in the heart of such a country as this, awaiting the permission of a single individual to put forth strength or skill and provide themselves with creature comforts? Wherein is such a condition better than chattel slavery? Even tho' utterly indifferent to the welfare of the masses, it is strange that the classes do not strive for a system that will enable their industrial serfs to toil steadily that wealth may the faster increase —that there be more produced by the many for the few to appropriate. The seven million working people now idle, might, if regularly employed and systematically robbed, produce a new crop of multi-millionaires. Our tariff tinkers and currency reformers are but so many Dame Partingtons assiduously trundling their little mops in the Atlantic Ocean. They may sop up and carry away a few buckets of brine; but the effect of these labors is not felt by the men among the breakers. These economic M.D.'s, with their salves and liniments, may cure eruptions on the cuticle; but the real trouble with Columbia is industrial heart-failure—the blood no longer visits every vein and artery in healthful flow. The old-school physicians afforded no relief, we must call in a specialist— one capable both of diagnosing the disease and prescribing a remedy. Such a remedy may make sad havoc with our cherished customs and overturn time-honored traditions; but before turning our sweet pipes for the usual dolorous wail anent a reincarnation of chaos,

we should study, and strive to understand that remark of Bacon's, to the effect that "a forward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation." To restore to labor its ancient independence by guaranteeing its God-given right to producing to the full extent of its power and retaining for its own use whatsoever its industry creates, is the problem of problems, and will scarce be satisfactorily solved without the elimination of more than one old economic landmark.

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The husband of Princess Chimay-Caramon has brought an action for divorce. There is nothing remarkable about this except the fact that he did not long ago make a legal separation unnecessary by caving in the head of the shameless bawd with a well-seasoned club. The Prince announced to the court, in effect, that he was prepared to prove that his wife had been criminally intimate with every he-thing in Europe, regardless of race or color, and asked that, in the interest of public decency, the press be excluded and the hearing had behind closed doors. This was a commendable precaution, as otherwise "the great public educator" would have flooded the world with all the disgusting details. The press has been trailing the Princess about for years past and reaping a rich harvest of salacious "sensations." It must have an exalted opinion of the morals and intelligence of its readers to assume that they are at all interested in the doings of a dirty drab who differs from other harlots only in having invested her dollars in a bogus title instead of in genuine diamonds. It has ileus of the mind and is vomiting fecal matter.

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The highest compliment ever paid Gov. Altgeld of Illinois was the studied affront paid him by the incoming ad-

ministration. To be flouted by a social leper, moral pariah and unclean political yahoo like Tanner were equivalent to being cursed by Caliban, black-guarded by Benedict Arnold, denounced by Judas Iscariot, lied about by Doll Tearsheet, defamed by Dana or incurred the enmity of Titus Oates. A slight by any of the Tanner crowd is a valuable certificate of good character—is "confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ" that the recipient thereof does not carry in his clothes what Reedy calls "the moral atmosphere of a logging-camp." Some of these days I will put a clothes-pin on my nose and write the biology of Gov. Tanner, that the people of Illinois may know what a slimy reptile can reach the summit of thier political pyramid.

For years past Mrs. Potter Palmer of Chicago has been striving desperately to break into New York's "select 400." I am utterly unable to account for this strange freak, as the odor of Gotham's social penetralia is not nearly so choice as that of Chicago's river on a summer's day, or the effluvia of her South-Side soap factories. True it is that there is no accounting for a woman's tastes. After a long and arduous campaign, the press now assures us that Mrs. Palmer has not only crossed the trocha which divides the New York patricians from the Chicago plebs, but taken possession of the enemy's territory and established her throne upon the debris of the fallen dynasty of the Astorbilts, whose social aroma descends to them from abandoned fish-marts and ancient hide-houses. For almost a generation I have been waiting to see the effete East succumb to the terrific assaults of this social amazon, who is saturated with the ozone and replete with the energy of the Windy City. And now it has surrendered unconditionally and is

grovelling supinely at the feet of its conqueror. Could Princess Eulalie see Potsie queening it over a continent she'd be sorry that she complained of "the insolence of those Palmer hotel people" and cut our future social sovereign cold. Still the horrid thought will intrude itself that a self-seeking press-gang may be systematically elongating the le-limb of Chicago's belle of years long gone by. Since the present season opened the daily press has crowned just 1722 different dames of more or less high degree as queen of New York's very swellest set—crowned 'em for a consideration. Mrs. Palmer is quite old enough to understand that the publishers of daily papers are not in business for their health—that the moment she closes her purse her social crown will be sent down to the business office and sold to the highest bidder. She is really too brilliant a woman to fritter away her time and money chasing rainbows. God gave her a good and obedient husband, and she ought to remain at home and manage him. What will it profit her to gain the whole world and then find, that, through her cruel neglect, Potter has pottered off on the cold trail of a wagon-track and become irretrievably lost? The man who becomes known simply as the husband of a Chicago society woman should be carefully belled and blanketed.

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The daily press continues to chroncile the death of people who seek relief from simple ailments in so-called Christian Science. The opinion seems to be gaining ground that Christian Scientists should be incarcerated as lunatics whose hallucination is dangerous to life. This idea contravenes the plans of an all-wise Providence. They are fool-killers employed by nature in the extermination of the unfit. They are the executives of the divine law of evolution. Those who fall victims to this

Mumbo-Jumbo business fully deserve their fate. It is urged that thousands of helpless children have been slain by this pseudo-scientific superstition. Quite true; but the children sacrificed to this modern Moloch were begotten by Christian Scientists, are the offspring of weak intellects, and an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. We may sorrow for their sufferings, but are compelled to admit that the race is benefitted by their demise.

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Pelican Island belongs to the city of Galveston, and Sandy Musgrove—the Texas Sancho Panza—has long been its governor. Parties who ought to know write me that ten years ago this property was valued at millions; today the Galveston Terminal is offering the city $100,000 for it. As Galveston is rantankerously Republican, We may infer that the "tidal wave of progress and prosperity" hit her while she was pointing nor'east and trying to pull a bathing suit on over her head. Or it may be that the old "Wharf Octopus" has an enterprising younker preparing to set up for itself. Galveston has a multitude of millionaires. She also has many men who have got thievery down to such a fine art that they can steal from themselves and then prove an alibi in the court of their own conscience.

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A TOUR AMONG THE TITANS.

POETS OF THE PAST AND PRESENT

THE Providence (R. I.) *Morning Journal* says that, to my mind, Tom Moore was a greater poet than Dante. I have said nothing to warrant such a conclusion, having merely remarked that people *read* Tennyson, Burns, and Moore, while they only talk about Homer, Dante and

Milton. This by no means argues that the first triad is greater than the last, for the crowd will not infrequently applaud a merry andrew and throw stones at a philosopher. Popularity with the masses is, *per se* no proof of merit; else were Hoyt's "Hole in the Ground" superior to Shakespeare's "Hamlet," Sam Jones' niggery slop preferable to Massillon's sermons, and "After the Ball" a better composition than Longfellow's "Bridge." As "like takes to like," a people capable of making McKinley president quite naturally prefers a Dobson to a Dante, and raves over Poe while forgetting Petrarch. Americans read chiefly for amusement. They want something "dead easy" to understand—move in the direction of the least resistance! It is far less labor to follow a garrulous guide thro' the dens of the Quartier Latin, and contemplate the atelier glories of the "altogether," than to keep pace with one whose path lies thro' the great void—who penetrates the mysteries of heaven and explores the corridors of hell. Far be it from me to disparage all the idols of the people, or condemn *in toto* our lighter literature. A voice, though it be sweeter than Israfeel's, is no better than the raven's croak if none do hear it; a light, though brilliant as the noonday sun, no better than mere fox-fire if none do see it. Perhaps the greatest poets have been "mute, inglorious Miltons." As there is beauty which eludes the painter's brush and the sculptor's chisel, a music that cannot be written, an eloquence that will not be spoken, a love that can learn no language, there must be a poetry, the very sum of these, which sets upon the lips the seal of silence. But of the inarticulate poets, as of the flowers born to blush unseen, we can know nothing. Of the articulate poets he is greatest who can best speak forth what others can only feel. Tom Moore is spokesman for the love and chivalry, Dante for the

awful and mysterious in man. Each is great in his particular province. In this super-practical age we are apt to underrate the poet, to forget that he too is a world-compeller. "Let me make the songs of a people," said Fletcher, "and you shall make its laws"— which were equivalent to saying: Let me be the controlling power and you may play the puppet. No poet whose music rings ever in the public ear can be despised, for with the song goes the sentiment. "Nearer My God to Thee" is more potent than all the preachers, while the "Marseillaise" bears "within its breast a thunderbolt."

But the mistake of the *Journal* is not our present concern, the controversy being here utilized as a case of John Doe vs. Richard Roe, to try poetic titles. It is well for us to turn to the poets occasionally in these utilitarian times and wash the greed and gall from our hearts with their heavenly dews, to refresh our shriveled souls with their divine harmony, to forget in sweet communion with these super-gifted minds that the almighty dollar is the chief end and aim of man, the Alpha and Omega of his existence. While the Aristocrasy of Wealth vaunts itself, and the Aristocracy of Birth burgeons like a green bay tree, there seems danger of the utter extinction of the Aristocracy of intellect—Man was not made altogether of mud, howsoever strange this theory may appear to the average individual. There is in him somewhat of the Divine Essence, howsoever dormant; and it is this that the true poet strives to develop, to render paramount "Man shall not live by bread alone," declares the Messiah. He cannot, for he is triune—body, mind and spirit; and all these must be ministered unto. Martinus Scriblerius thought the cunning Nurembergers might make a good wood and a leather man, "who should reason as well as most country parsons." Whether the idea was

acted upon, and many of these now content to consume victuals and know the world is round, be his descendants, I know not; but certain it is that the man who hath a soul in him, as well as a digestive apparatus and automatic thinking machine wound up for a period of years, craves something which he finds in no kitchen and no school. That something it is the province of the inspired man, of the poet, to supply. It is not enough that he sound all the depths and shoals of the human heart and speak forth its pleasure and its pain. It is not his province to play the pedagogue and school us in worldly wisdom; to stand like a king's jester, between us and ennui, or play the intellectual pander. He is God's messenger to mankind, interpreter of the higher law, and must, like Pallas, teach us that

> To live by law,
> Acting the law we live by without fear,
> And, because right is right, to follow right
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

It is for him to teach, not how gain may be got, but how life may be made better worth the living; to interpret its true significance; to advance the standards of humanity ever further up that mountain at whose base growl and grovel the brutes, on whose summit dwell the gods. For a diamond, which he may hide in his navel, man will brave every danger and faint with toil in the tropics; yet 'tis but a barbaric bauble, a trifling bit of carbon with which sportive nature has trapped a sunbeam. Every morning God hangs the very grass-blades with gems more beautiful; every night he sows the vault of heaven with astral fire; day by day he girdles the globe with a glory that shames all the gold of Ormus and of Ind; but we do not thank him therefor—ask only that he give us our

daily bread, our modicum of bacon and beans! We say of a man, "he is rich," because he has a million of money; but do riches consist exclusively of material things? Is there no intellectual, no spiritual wealth which may minister to man's comfort, even though not exchangeable at the corner grocery for sugar and soap?—through it will by no means insure its possessor an honored place in society's "h'upper sukkles?" Was Burns poor while following his plow 'mid Scotia's rugged hills?—his heart a treasury of song? Was Milton poor when aged and blind and his larder scant?—poor while dwelling among angels and looking upon the throne of the living God? Evidently not, for he assures us that material wealth is the natural product of Perdition, and adds:

> "The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

Was Croesus, counting his hoarded treasure, more to be envied than Epictetus thinking the thoughts of gods while wearing the shackles of a slave? Who would exchange for government bonds the wealth bequeathed him by Shakespeare? How much do you want for the agony of Lear? The mobility of Brutus? The kisses of Juliet? For how much yellow gold will you dismiss "Locksley Hall" from your memory and tear "Evangeline" out of your heart? How much will you take for the privilege of looking upon the beauty of woman? of listening to the laughter of children? of dreaming where

> "The long light shakes across the lake
> And the wild cataract leaps in glory?"

Answer me these ere you dare assert that any man upon whom God's sunlight falls is really poor—that the beggar who holds out his palsied hand for ha' pence may

not be "greater than kings, than gods more glad." From his tub Diogenes pitied Alexander's intellectual poverty; actually declined to associate with him!—a fact very remarkable, no doubt, to our Anglo-maniacs, who cannot raise their worshipful eyes above the shoe-latch of a petty princeling. There is a poverty of the body and a poverty of the soul. Cleveland is a multi-millionaire and president of the United States; but he is an intellectual tramp, a spiritual pauper. Diogenes would not wait for him to get out of his sunlight—he'd pick up his tub and take to the woods. Chatterton reveled in the wealth of the universe, 'tho he was buried in the potter's field. A man may be rich tho' penniless and in pain. Who would not be Alexander Pope, with all his physical suffering, rather than the half-forgotten king who sneered at him, or any of those he "damned to everlasting fame?" Lucifer prefers to "reign in hell than serve in heaven"—to the utter amazement of those American sovereigns who play Uriah Heep to secure the privilege of licking the pots.

Strange, is it not, that with all our developing machinery, both spiritual and temporal; with all our increase of creature comforts and enchantment of physical powers; with all our constitution and creed-making, life is becoming ever more a Momus-masque, ever more "stale, flat and unprofitable."—the number of suicides constantly increasing! We have ceased breeding great poets and now develop only successful pork-packers. We have become so practical that when we do for a moment leave off our trafficking and law-tinkering, our soap-boiling and pig-sticking, it is only to pay up our celestial insurance premiums by means of pence and prayers, so that when Death deprives us of the riches of earth, our policy, duly issued by this or the other company,—as the Methodist

Mutual or Baptist Benevolent—will entitle us to still greater treasures in Heaven. We want to secure corner lots in New Jerusalem, not because God is there, but because the walls are of jasper, the gates of pearl, the streets of fine gold. Seldom or never do we contemplate the inexpressible happiness of comprehending the stupendous works of the Creator—all we ask is free bed and board, unparalleled magnificence and permission to wear feathers and fly. It is simply a more gorgeous, o more barbaric Blenheim Palace, its God an exaggerated Duke of Marlborough who "blows hisself" for his own ineffable glory and the entertainment of the gang.

Macaulay says that, "Perhaps no person can be a poet, or even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind. "Yet he not only enjoyed poetry, but strove very hard to write it—came so near succeeding as to endanger his carefully elaborated theory that a man cannot be at the same time a great poet and a discriminating critic. He was a beautiful rhimester and his verse does not want fire—fairly flames with it, in fact; but after all it suggests Col. Tansey's headlines, or the clever work of a war correspondent. What he says of Milton's prose is true of his own verse: "It is a perfect field of cloth of gold; the style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery." But wit does not make a comedy, nor ornaments an epic poem. That great poets are not always good critics is amply proven by the fact that Milton considered "Paradise Lost" inferior to "Paradise Regained," While Byron prized "Childe Harold" so lightly that it was with difficulty he could be persuaded upon to print it. Macaulay and Edwin Arnold are both learned men and masters of their mother tongue; both please with their verse; but neither can get his feet off the too solid earth and "soar above the Aonian Mount." Whether their minds be too

sound to float in that fine ether where dwell the poets and the prophets, midway between the seen and unseen world, I know not; but wish that Macaulay had told us of "Virginia" and "the dauntless three" in his matchless prose, instead of imitating the bad example of Silas Wegg and dropping into poetry—that Arnold had poured his "Light of Asia" in upon us with less wordy circumlocution. Macaulay's prose is a majestic ocean, upon which might ride the world's intellectual argosies; but his poetic fury is mere Greek fire. D'Alembert says "There are two things that can reach the top of a pyramid—the eagle and the reptile." Macaulay was neither the one nor the other; but a man of talent whom a wonderful memory and tireless industry made pre-eminent in the realm of prose, but could not arise to the heights of poesy. Bucephalus may be mastered by patient application, and bear his rider bravely; but Pegasus scorns the bit.

Genius, in whatsoever province, is usually accompanied by what the world is pleased to consider a disturbance of the mental equipoise. We are prone to assume that there is something radically wrong with the mind that we do not understand, with the phenomenon we cannot comprehend. Christ was considered a crank and Gallileo a dreamer by their contemporaries; but at this distance we are able to discern that the fault was with their critics. A genius is an original. There are no precedents by which such a mind can be guaged, no law by which it can be measured. We realize that he is not like ourselves, and wisely shake our heads and tap our bulging foreheads. If he disagrees with us—if he dare assume that our little hickory-nuts could not furnish forth a dozen Minervas without missing the knowledge—he is a rebel like Washington, a blasphemer like St. Paul, a lunatic like Fulton or a demagogue like Lincoln. But the centuries

roll away, and posterity, glancing back across our long-forgotten graves, sees outlined across the sky the figure of a colossus. The mind of a great poet is simply of a different texture from that which houses in common clay. No merchant prince or railway magnate is like to give us a companion piece to the "Paradise Lost" of Milton, the "Divine Comedy" of Dante or the "Revelations" of John of Patmos. No man whose head is simply a calculating machine can comprehend those remarkable productions. They are beyond the province of Reason, in open revolt against all the laws of Logic. There is no following these lofty poetic flights on Icarian wings, by means of Lick telescopes, or other mechanical contrivance whatsoever. Their characters are not of earth, or heaven, or hell. They do not belong in time and space. They are new creations, in new universes by new gods. Their "natural laws" are quite other than we have patched up for the government of our humdrum *mecanique celeste*. If you can comprehend this, "patronize providence" to the extent of a few shillings and join in the mighty bacchanal of unbridled intellect; if not, it were well to return speedily to your ditching and delving, your cent per cent, and that polite society from which the works of Goethe were once barred as obscene—which can scarce tolerate even the rose-water eupheisms of the Iconoclast! Why should you waste your precious time with Milton and Dante? The devil being long since dead, the fires of hell drawn by our revised orthodoxy, and the needle's eye expanded into a triumphal arch, thro' which the rich man rides his camel into "the kingdom!" And Homer? Avoid him too, for the Dodona Oaks have been utilized to boil a pot, the Delphic Oracle has gone out of business and the sons of men no longer become drunken on the sweet waters of the Pierian Spring. The gods have flown

from High Olympus, Ilium is a desert waste, and the shade of Achilles has passed from the gloomy shades of Acheron through Elysian Fields, into Malebolge and Sam Jones' democratic hell, only to vanish thence into utter nothingness, or Nirvana. It were much more sensible, doubtless, to run a corner on salt cod-fish, loan money at usury or bull the veal market than fritter away time with these crack-brains, who dream with open eyes until a garret expands into a univesre throbbing with the music of the spheres, or resounding with the crash of celestial armor as the angels of light contend with the legions of darkness for the throne of God. When John of Patmos tells us that he will give us the Morning Star we feel quite sure that he cawn't get the blawsted thing, don-cher-knaw. Besides, what would we do with it?

Surely the poets are quite lunatic, else why should Heine discourse of the unspeakable sweetness and enrapturing joys for which Love is indebted to Sorrow, or Longfellow shed "tears, idle tears" when his digestion was good, the house rent paid and every shirt button in its appointed place? Why else should Dante leave his beautiful Florence to wander thro' the murky shadows of Hades? Why grasp the shaggy sides of Lucifer and breathe the fumes of burning sulphur, when he might have given some plump maiden the arm-clutch and inhaled the odors of Araby? When there were so many social "functions" to be written up, what excuse had he for harrowing our souls with a description of Farinata "lifting his haughty and tranquil brow from his couch of everlasting fire"? Did not Lady Byron say her husband was mad and pack off to her parents, leaving to others the practice of such sweet psychiatry as may minister to a mind diseased? If not quite crazy, why should Byron go wandering about the world like a lost soul, when he

might have lived comfortably in England, played baccara with his "liege lord and sovereign-born" and stuffed himself to the bursting point with plum-pudding—perchance been purchased and had his debts paid by an American parvenu? If not altogether impractical and intellectually oblique could he have so heartily despised an eminently respectable society that was carefully preserving its game, clipping coupons and dressing quite up to date? Had there not been more than one screw loose in the man's head would he have squandered his fortune and lost his life trying to free Greece from the tyranny of the Turk? What was Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba? Why should he prate of "burning Sappho" when the old girl had been in the water for six-and-twenty centuries? Did not all Europe denounce him as a madman and brand him as a black-guard? Still a few people persist in reading him—There was no taint of madness in Byron, not the slightest indication that this towering intellectual pine was "withering at the top." He was simply born without intellectual epidermis—his soul was stark naked and shrieked with agony in the Borean blasts. Like outraged Philomel, Byron pressed the thorn ever deeper into his breast—strove to deaden his agony with added pain. The common conception of Byron is no more like him than are the inky-black stage Othellos like Shakespeare's dusky Moore. We are accustomed to think of him as a swarthy Mephistopheles standing self-sufficient and contemptuous apart from his fellows—"grand, gloomy and peculiar." Byron was the prince of good fellows, lord of the revel, master of the feast, generous to a fault. His friends were part of his own soul, and from the cradle to the grave all with whom he came in contact—his wife and guardian only excepted—appear to have loved him passionately. His schoolmates, his preceptors,

his publisher, his traveling companions—everything and everybody, from his dog and Albanian servant to Hobhouse and Dallas, yielded to the charm of his personality. Tom Moore, who came to fight him, departed his staunch defender. Byron was red-haired and blue-eyed, bespeaking the sanguine temperament, in youth strangely beautiful,—

> "Hyperian curls, the front of Jove himself;
> A station like the herald Mercury
> New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."

It were idle, perhaps impossible, to trace all the causes which led him into the dark realms of despair a nature at once so fierce, so loving and so sensitive; that made him throw himself into the embrutalizing arms of Circe—like Sappho seeking surcease from suffering from amid the slime and monsters of the sea. The true poet is half a woman and half a savage, uniting the sensitiveness of the one, which weep for every woe, with the lawless imagination of the other, which sees the contention of embattled hosts in the thunder-storm, hears the voice of God in the ocean's roar and peoples every pellucid stream and fragrant wood with fairer forms than e'er took mortal mould. And who dare say that nymph and naiad —that "the spirits of the hills, with all their dewey hair blown back like flame"—are but a dream, a madman's fantasie? That priest nor prophet hath seen or heard what we have not—that there be no more in heaven and Earth than we have dreamed of in our small philosophy? To some weak eyes the moon appears but a disc the size and color of a custard pie, glued to the black o'er-hanging firmament; to others it is a well-rounded globe, a mighty world, self-poised in unmeasured space. Why should the mole discredit the eagle because

it cannot see the mountain summits, upon whose icy armor vainly splinters the fiery shafts of the midday sun? Why discredit the rainbow?

Perhaps of all Byron's poems Don Juan is most read—an apt illustration of the Shakespearan axiom that the evil men do lives after them, while the good is oft interred with their bones. Don Juan is Byron drunk; Childe Harod is Byron sober. In the one he is Momus gibing to make a hoodlum holiday; in the other he is Prometheus chained in the rock, the vultures preying upon his vitals. Goethe's "Sorrows of Werther" is but the melancholly outpouring of a youthful and romantic soul—a kind of intellectual belly-ache which precedes the manhood of most gifted minds. The great German soon recovered from that sentimental Miss Nancyism which "resembles sorrow only as the mist resembles rain," and thenceforth his song is healthy and full of hope; "Childe Harold" is the utterance of a man who has drained the cup of life to the bitter dregs and, like Ecclesiates, learned for a verity that all is vanity. It is unfortunate that Byron's finest compositions should have been early seized upon by those literary ghouls, the school text-book compilers, and crammed down the public throat. What school-boy has not struggled with "The Assyrian came down," "There was a Sound of Revelry," "The Isles of Greece," and "Roll on thou deep" etc., until he felt as did Byron himself when, "upon the woody Apennine," he recalled his early struggles with Horace; "D——n Homo!" Macaulay's "Battle of Ivry" is another instance of spoiling a pretty piece of word-painting by too much familiarity; but it may be retained in our text books to foster among our "priest-led citizens" love for the "little red schoolhouse," and reconcile them to the ideas of A. P. Aism. Because we see the sun rise every day we do not appreciate

the majesty and beauty of this wondrous miracle. Were we privileged to look upon it but once in a lifetime how careful we would be not to miss the first faint glow on spire or mountain-peak—how eagerly we would scan the heavens to see, perhaps, "a poising eagle burn above the unrisen morrow!" Byron was fully conscious of his intellectual strength and assumed the bays as his right divine. Like all poetic natures, he was morbidly sensitive to adverse criticism. He did not, however, weep when wounded, like Jaque's deer, but answered his enemies as the fierce she-wolf replies to the hounds that leap at her throat and hang upon her flank—"died biting hard." If he could but bruise one of the heads of the hydra—" "though his own hand should suffer in the encounter "—he was content. Well could he say to the world,

> "I have not flattered its rank breath, nor bow'd
> To its idolatries a patient knee."

Of late poets, Edgar Allan Poe alone has shown some faint adubration of the Byronic mind; but so strange are the judgments of the world, so inexplicable in its affections, that while Poe is loved for his very frailties, the immortal genius of Byron cannot induce it to forgive his faults. Byron was kingly in his cussedness; Poe was beneath contempt. The first was immoral, but the last was mean. The muse of Poe is a fantastic, hysterical creature who wails and shrieks without apparent cause—is the sweet singer of Bedlam, the patron saint of suicides; Byron suggests "great Hero's angry eyes" as she withdraws herself "into a golden cloud." Even Paul Verlane, who from the stys of Paris twitters sweet minor notes—a wild anemone springing from the carcass of a gila monster—has his apologists: and Anacreon, the Grecian Pan, piping to desiring nymphs, is hailed with praise; but

Byron, lord of the realm of song, bears on his imperial brow of the purifying angel, but the brand of Peor.

It may interest the *Journal* man to know that, while I do not place Moore above Dante, Poe declared Tennyson the greatest poet the world has produced—which were giving to Moore's inferior the post of honor at a feast where sit not only Dante and Byron, but Chios' immortal bard. Dante would have voted the place to Virgil, while Alfred Austin would probably have assumed it himself. Moore has a much stronger hold than has the Tuscon poet upon the hearts of the people, who, in the language of Mr. Browning,

"want no half-gods, panomphean Joves,"

preferring the feast of roses in the Vale of Cashmere to Ugolino's ghastly banquet on the head of Ruggieri in hell. There is at present a disposition in some quarters to exalt Burns above Moore and Tennyson, a fact due far more to mawkish sentimentality than to good sense. The Scots, ever clannish, and powerful in the world of letters, are responsible for the extravagant tributes paid to the genius of the Ayrshire plowman. They apologize for his faults and plead in extenuation of the crudity of his work his limited opportunities and lack of education. The same might be urged on behalf of Shakespeare, who beginning with equal poverty, made for himself opportunities, and, in lieu of a formal education, drew into his vast mind the knowledge of the world and became "the guide, philosopher and friend" of future ages. Prof. Heyne, one of the most learned men of Germany, and Dr. Johnson, the British cyclopedia, had an even harder struggle than Burns to get knowledge and bread. Homer was a blind beggar and Bunyan an ignorant tinker; yet no one has thought it necessary to apologize for the "Iliad" or

"Pilgrim's Progress." I do not mean by this to disparage the work of Burns, but to expose the fallacy that it would have been much better if he had not been "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined" by circumstances over which he had no control. The strong man needs no adventitious aids—he rises despite of obstacles, as the kite against the wind. The man who does not enjoy Burns' thrush-like melody never got close to the great heart of nature, but it were absurd to urge that the Pandean pipe is equal to the Orphic lyre. Marsyas plays sweetly; but he should avoid contests with Apollo. If Caledonia must have a poet who can out-sing both the Irish Moore and the English Tennyson, why does she not put her trust in Byron, who boasts himself "half Scot by birth and bred a whole one." While Moore never learned by personal experience, as did Byron, that

> "He who surpasses and subdues mankind
> Must look down on the hate of those below,"

he occupies a prominent place in the second order of poets. He is as superior to Tennyson as the latter, in turn is superior to the Ayrshire plowman. Burns whistles gaily o'er the lea; Scott plays the bagpipe, Tennyson and Longfellow on "soft recorders"; Macaulay beats time on a brazen shield with a Roman sword; but Moore *sings*, and that as blithe and free as a mockbird.

Far be it from me to play Fadladeen to any deserving Feramorz; but I can scarce be accused of hypercriticism by other than Kipling cranks for saying that the world is at present without a poet. Versifiers are thick indeed as Milton's Vallambrosian leaves or Pharoah's locusts, and among them are a few of sufficient merit to enable the Goddess of Song to enjoy a more or less satisfactory St. Martin's summer; but true it is that genuine poets are

born, not made, and such births are preternatural, if not miraculous. Heaven does not send every year a Homer, nor even a Horace, and all attempts to hatch bulbuls from goose-eggs by means of educational incubators have proven abortive. I would not discourage those who, with cornstalk fiddle or twanging jews-harp, add ever so little to the world's harmony; who help to swell the grand diapason of the universe—much as the old lady increased the waters of the ocean. The nightingales having gone, let us at least have bluejays and blackbirds. When there is a song in the soul, even though but a Dobsonian ditty or the nymphomaniacal wail of a Wilcox, in God's name let it come forth, with or without resort to intellectual ergotine. Let Parnassus continue to labor, even though it bring forth only an occasional meadow mouse. Having no Alfred Tennyson to regale us with the "Charge of the Light Brigade," let Alfred Austin sing how Oom Paul got England's bold buccaneer by the umbilicus. If we cannot have a wondrous tale of Troy, let Orie Bower describe in halting hexameters the "dauntless squat" of contending ironclads, "with inside fire and hate redhot." Burns being no longer here to sing of "Bonnie Annie Laurie," let James Whitcomb Riley "reel and falter and fall afar," smitten by the "Beautiful Eyes" of a snub-nosed Hoosier beaut at a husking-bee. Virgil's Eclogues having gone quite out of date, let Texas' poet-lariat gird up his loins with a timothy rope and play Thyrsis to Frank Stanton's Corydon. Kipling is out with a new volume of verse entitled "Seven Seas," upon the strength of which Montgomery Schuyler—whoever he may be—pronounces him "the unchallenged laureate of Greater Britain." Perhaps he has gone unchallenged because Alfred Austin, like Kipling's American brother-in-law, could not get close enough to him to deliver a cartel. The

critics are so liberal in their laudation of the "Seven Seas" as to suggest an observation by Carlyle to the effect that "literature, too, has its Paternoster-row mechanism," and huge subterranean puffing-bellows; so that books are not only printed, but in a great measure, sold by machinery. Like the gymkhana, Kipling has become a fad because of his artificial oddity. People get the Kiplingismus just as they do the buttonitis. Society has become *ennuye* of itself, and lays violent hands on whatsoever will help it get done with life. First it had Browning on the brain. Next it contracted the Haggard horrors. Dr. DuMaurier cured it of this intellectual fit by throwing it into convulsions. And now it is Kipling-cracked, and has the Yellow Kid complaint. What form the next literary fad will take the good Lord only knows; but it will speedily cause Kiplingism to be forgotten—send it "glimmering through the dream of things that were."

* * *

AN INSULT TO OMNIPOTENCE.

Just two years ago I had somewhat to say about the bad practice of paying a brace of preachers $5 per minute each for standing up in our legislative halls and insulting Almighty God with perfunctory prayers. When the Twenty-fourth Texas legislature assembled it was confronted by a veritable swarm of these sanctified buzzards, clamoring for five-dollar bills. Some of them had been lobbying by letter for the soft snaps months before the legislature met. At the capitol they were importunate as Arabian beggars crying for bakesheesh. Whether my little lecture on sacerdotal pie-grafting had a salutary effect, or there has been a terrible mortality among clerical hypocrites since that time, I will not undertake to say;

but certain it is that upon the assembling of the present legislature, only some half-dozen persons were found industriously log-rolling for these sinecures—anxious to pray for the Solons for a valuable consideration. We should all go down on our marrow-bones at least once a month, and ask the good God to replenish our stock of saving grace; but if He ever listens to a formal supplication, preferred for filthy lucre, without repenting him that he gave the founder of the anti-prohibition party a tip to go in out of the rain, then I've sized him up wrong. Imagine one of the Apostles pocketing a treasury-warrant for making a formal prayer! Think of John the Baptist hunting a five-dollar-a-minute job! of St. Paul loafing at public expense in the vineyard of the Lord! of St. Peter standing up in the august presence of peanut politicians and grinding out a short-horse prayer which he had rehearsed before an amorous looking glass! Great God—if there is a God—have pity on the pusillanimous soul of such a pismire—if it's got a soul! Aside from the arrant hypocrisy of such a proceeding, the insult to public intelligence and the fact that it is calculated to bring all religion into contempt, it is contrary to the genius of this government to tax the people to pay for prayers. While such practices prevail, our boast that this is a land of religious liberty is a brazen lie. "Entire separation of Church and State" has long been an American shibboleth; yet we compel every man, regardless of his religious opinion, to contribute of his substance to provide sinecures for preachers in the army and navy, at the federal and state capitals, and all our penitentiaries. "No union of Church and State," indeed! We increase the infidel's tax-rate that costly temples may be exempt from public exactions. We deprive him of his natural rights 52 days in the year because an omnium gatherum of sap-head ignorami suppose that

God wore himself to a frazzle in six days of unremitting toil and "rested on the Seventh"! Does he still continue to "rest on the Sabbath day"? And if so, are all the unctuous prayers preferred on that day by perspiring pulpiteers pigeon-holed by the recording angel and carried before him Monday morning—like the cases in our police-courts? Does he continue to loll around on his luxurious throne on Sunday afflicted with that tired feeling? Are the laws of nature operative only six days in seven? As he is "three in one and one in three," perhaps he's able to "sub" for himself! Despite our vaunt of religious liberty, the infidel is compelled to pay for prayers to a Deity whose existence he denies, the Jew must help bear the cost of services he considers blasphemous, and the Catholic is taxed to provide sinecures for Protestant preachers who denounce his church as the "W— of Babylon" and his pope as vice-vergent of the devil. We are told that the prayers provided at public expense are "for the benefit of the whole people." Doubtless the people need praying for when the legislature is in session; but purchased piety is no antidote for evil. Shall we Baptists be compelled to take our spiritual pabulum from Dr. Smoot's Presbyterian platter? Of what assistance can he be to us? He's hoofing it to the henceforth by the dusty predestination turnpike, while we are gracefully floating thither via the river-route. Can we amphibians affiliate with sectaries out of whom the original sin has not been soaked? Clearly, if legislative chaplainships be indispensable—if we must mix our religion and politics and serve two masters synchronously—there should be a chaplain for every denomination. It is violative of the spirit of the constitution to display in our public regulations any sectarian preference. As there are perhaps 100 sects in Texas, the legislature would require 200 chap-

lains at an expense of $1,000 per day; but shall we pause to count the cost where religious principle is concerned? As Jews, Atheists and Seventh-day Adventists have no rights which we Christians are bound to respect, we might confiscate their property and, with the proceeds, establish a permanent prayer fund and invest it in convict farms. As the Solons soon acquire the habit of arriving late when chaplains manifest a disposition to earn their salaries by "wrassling" with the Lord more than a minute or two, it were useless to arrange the denominational invocations in alphabetical order—beginning with the Cranfillian faction of the Baptist faith and ending with the Yezidees, or worshippers of the Devil. By having the entire sacerdotal contingent tackle the throne of grace at the same time they might carry it by assault—especially if led on by our "heroic young Christian governor." Or we might assign a day to each in regular rotation. If the legislature should adjourn before running the entire religious gamut, it would scarce bankrupt our Christian resignation. As "God is everywhere," and so long as he hears the prayers it matters little whether anybody else does or not, we might permit the various chaplains to prefer their official petitions at home, and, by paying only for actual service rendered, secure representation for every sect without increase of present cost. I make no charge for these suggestions; but if the Solons desire to testify their gratitude by tendering a vote of thanks, or adorning Gov. Culberson's office with my portrait, the gentle courtesy will be appreciated. I once suggested that the legislature save the state $10 a day by the purchase of a couple of Kalmuch praying machines; and altho the proposition did not meet with approval, I am still partial to the plan. Ten dollars a day for 90 days is $900—no bagatelle these hard times. If Congress and all the state

legislatures would adopt the idea $450 per diem would be saved the poor downtrodden taxpayer on the single item of prayer. Economy being the universal watch-word, surely this is worthy consideration. I will undertake to furnish the latest improved praying machines for a dollar apiece and guarantee them to outlast half-a-dozen legislatures. With these mechanical aids each law architect can do his own praying in any language and in conformity with any creed, and a ten-year-old page may grind out perfunctory invocations for the powers that be and the people as satisfactorily as a high-priced preacher. All you have to do is to give the wheel a whirl and look deeply religious while it revolutes. Another recommendation—which alone should lead to its immediate adoption—is that it never writes out its prayers and hands them to press correspondents the day before they are delivered. While it may not be so eloquent as Drs. Smoot and Jackson, it is some satisfaction to know that it is not working off on the Almighty, as the outpourings of a full heart, something it has carefully memorized. It does not end its invocations with a fashionable "Awmen"—with the accent on the Aw. Its product is in many ways superior to the hand-made legislative prayer. This is the age of machinery, of labor-saving devices in every province of human endeavor; hence the rejection of my plan by Congress and the various legislatures demonstrates that our lawmakers are not up-to-date. In all earnestness, I protest against these hollow mockeries enacted in the name of the Omnipotent. If there be any virtue in prayer, we must seek it in the old-fashioned sort which wells up in the heart like a living spring, and rises from the lips with the passionate incoherence of a child pleading beneath the rod. "Lord be merciful to me, a sinner," wrung by remorse from the heart of a Magdalen or murderer, is

worth more than all the studied invocations since the sun of that far first morning poured its flood of gold into the Edenic garden. A petition that is to be submitted to an earthly power should be prepared with care, that it may be at once forceful and respectful; but as God is omnipresent and searches our most secret thoughts, the preacher who laboriously constructs and memorizes a prayer is a greater ass than the man who compels his sweetheart to help him compose and hear him rehearse a marriage proposal which he expects to make her on the morrow. The various legislatures are bribing knaves or fools to commit blasphemy, and every man who countenances this insult to the Deity richly deserves to be damned—and damned he would be were I editing the universe.

. . .

When the Republicans declared for bimetallism through international agreement, it simply meant "at the Greek calends," or "when water runs up hill." It was not bimetallism they wanted, but votes they needed in their business. Those who voted the Hanna-Cleveland-Sherman ticket with the expectation that Europe would help us remonetize silver, and thereby cut her own throat for our own behoof, would buy gold-bricks of strolling vagabonds. Wolcott has been sent abroad to secure a European certificate to the well-established fact that, despite the advent of the trolley car and the bicycle, America continues to breed her full complement of burros.

. . .

Mrs. Ella Castle, the San Francisco multi-millionairess whose kleptomania got her into an English prison, and whose gold got her out again, was recently "operated upon at the Polyclinic hospital, Phila., to restore her to her normal condition, and left the institution perfectly

well," says the dispatches. Thus does science go "creeping on from point to point." Now that it has been demonstrated that the thieving habit can be cured by the surgeon's knife—without applying it to the jugular—may it not also prove an antidote for lying, hypocrisy, avarice and other ills? In the meantime we will continue to put kleptomaniacal laborers and laundresses in the penitentiary.

* * *

SOME CHEERFUL LIARS.

I RATHER like an entertaining, consistent liar—an adept in mendacity who has sufficient art to conceal his art;—but must confess that the very awkwardness of the falsehoods exploited by the Republican press since the late unpleasantness, alias the election, is innoculating me with ennui. Unless they grade up I fear I will be compelled to seek divertisement in Little Billee Pshaw Bowen's Cuban war fictions, or the Munchausenisms of Josef Phewlitzer's very able circulation liar. By the by, who is Little Billee Bowen, who has discovered that Weyler is an angel with wide-spreading wings, from which sweet mercy drips on Cuba as gently as the dews of heaven? We used to have a Bowen here in Texas who was something of a liar himself. He tried very hard to become a newspaper man; but, unable to get further than the journalistic stage, gave it up with a sigh, turned preacher, and, after one or two ineffectual flutters, dropped out of sight. He was one of those important, plug-hatted personages whom a gentleman feels an instinctive impulse to kick—a kind of mongrel cross between a jackass rabbit and a peacock. Can the Little Billee who is worshipping Trilby Weyler's tootsie Wootsies be our own long-lost Johannes Factotum, or Jack-o'-all trades? No; it is not necessary to return

him; we simply asked the question from idle curiosity—the two liars being so much alike.

Perhaps I am too exacting in my tastes; but it seems to me that a kleptomaniac who never steals from members of her own family, and a liar who cannot give an air of plausibility to his fiction, should vote themselves failures, and change their professions. A really artistic liar is not exactly the noblest work of God; but next to an honest politician, he is, perhaps, the rarest. It is a trifle strange that in this age when we "professors" of almost everything,—from corn-curing to schoolroom elocution—none have yet formally announced themselves instructors in the gentle art of falsehood; yet here is a decided social hiatus in our social economy, a veritable "aching void." Think what an inestimable boon it would be to partisan editors, merchants who are selling out below cost, and people suddenly tackled for a "tenner" by impecunious acquaintances—not to mention the married men! What Benedict has not felt that an important feature of his education had been overlooked as he awkwardly floundered from one stupid fib into another—seeking, not so much to shield himself from well-merited reproach as the patient little wife from pain. David says that all men are liars, and I am beginning to suspect that Bath-Sheba's paramour was inspired. If we must lie, why not do so scientifically, *à la* Machiavelli? Why go about it clumsily and suffer the humiliation of being disbelieved when, with a little grooming, we might do it gracefully, cheerfully, plausibly, to the delight of others and the satisfaction of ourselves? I do not feel altogether qualified to write a manual on the art of lying—albeit I was for some years editor of the San Antonio *Express*, which supported Geo. Clark for governor; but it seems to me that the fundamental principle of successful falsehood is to establish

confidence by occasionally telling the truth—that the true expert in this false profession will never prevaricate unless there be a better excuse therefor than pure love of lying. That appears to be the rock on which the Republican editors have wrecked their reputations as masters of the science of mendacity. There was some little excuse for their pre-election falsehoods; and, while they were very clumsily constructed, I realize that their authors were doing the best they could, and refrained from cruel and unusual criticism. It is my invariable rule not to shoot the fiddler while the dance is in progress, no matter what his performance. But while the Republican press and its mugwump allies may have found it necessary to do the Annanias act before election, I fail to see wherein it profits them to continue tempting Providence. McKinley's election—by fair means or foul—being conceded, what is to be gained by persisting in the ridiculous falsehood that he represents the intelligence and honor of the country, while the followers of Bryan were, for the most part, imported anarchists, repudiators and idiots? Is it true that "men seldom forgive those whom they have grossly injured"? The following from the Wheeling (W. Va.) *Daily Intelligencer* is but a mild sample of Republican post-election literature:

"The Philadelphia *Press* shows that the McKinley States spend annually on their public schools the very large sum of $107,415,656, the Bryan States, $30,487,087. This is a very striking difference. Perhaps it accounts in a great measure for the result of the election. It cannot be denied that the most intelligent communities were against Bryan and Bryanism. This is shown again by the relative number of illiterates in the two groups of states. The McKinley States, with a population of almost 40,000,000,

have 822,048 white illiterates. The Bryan States with a population of less than 23,000,000, have 1,197,000 white illiterates. It is a good thing for a country when it is governed by its intelligence. The triumph of McKinley was the triumph of the national virtue and intelligence."

According to the United States census of 1890—the last statistics—the number of white illiterates in the McKinley States was, in round numbers, 1,730,000, or vastly more than *double* that given by the Intelligencer. There are no reliable statistics of the amount of money now annually expended by the various states for the maintenance of public schools; but in 1890—as shown by the census—the Bryan states, with but little more than half the population of the McKinley states, had an average school attendance of 7 to their 11—and this despite the fact that they contained the great bulk of the nation's Chinese, Mexican and Negro population, comparatively few of whom send children to the public schools. How is that for an educational show-down, my sweet little man? According to the census' report the states having the lowest percentage of white illiterates are the following, in the order named: Nebraska, Kansas, Wyoming, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Nevada. Bryan carried them all but one, and came near getting that. If I lived in a McKinley state, like West Virginia, where the percentage of white illiterates is 13; or in Kentucky, where it is nearly 16—not including Watterson—I should have precious little to say on this subject. In Texas we have a very large Mexican population—classed as white by a color-blind census bureau—30 per cent. of whom are illiterates; yet despite this handicap our percentage of white illiterates is but 10.8. When you know absolutely nothing about a subject, why don't you braid your ears and quietly cork yourself?

The "country governed by its intelligence"! Your impudence is all right, but you should take your reasoning faculty out and get it filed. What was McKinley's popular majority? Less than the number of votes cast for him by illiterate negroes, who could not tell their printed names from Chinese laundry checks. Fully 60 per cent. of the Southern negroes cannot read—90 per cent. of them could not tell an electoral college from a Methodist camp-meeting. They voted for McKinley, partly because he wears the same political trademark as did Massa Linkum, but chiefly because they got one or two dollars apiece for so doing. Hanna's agents bought up our Mexican population—thereby "increasing the Republican vote in Texas 100,000"! Had the *zona libre* been more densely populated they would have imported enough peons to have put Texas in the McKinley column. Had it occurred to you that every state having a large contingent of illiterate foreign-born voters went for McKinley, Texas alone excepted, and that here the Republicans made "wonderful gains"—by the grace of the long green? New York has, in round numbers, 198,000 foreign-born illiterates (says the U. S. census); Pennsylvania, 144,000; Massachusetts, 101,000; Illinois, 75,000; Wisconsin, 67,000; Michigan, 64,000, and so on down the line. Minnesota, Ohio and Indiana are especially well stocked with these intelligent patriots who helped Mark Hanna "preserve the honor of our country"—for a consideration. Ignorant Huns and lousy Lazzaroni, imported in defiance of law by Patriot Hanna and his compeers to debauch American labor, made McKinley president. At least that is a reasonable inference, for that vote is ever for sale and Mark Hanna had agents in every State which he imagined might be carried by a liberal use of honey. The presidency was bought by the syndicate of which Hanna was

the head. Who says so? His accomplices in the crime—the blessed gold-bug "Democrats" who, not being permitted to swipe the pie-counter as reward for their Benedict Arnoldism, are now turning state's evidence. Even Texas' *Gal-Dal News* has discovered it and is vociferously proclaiming it over several square miles of territory. The *Double-Ender* has got several people almost persuaded that had it for a moment suspected the presidential syndicate was throwing the "soup" into purchasable sovereigns, it would have supported Palmer. It is said, "When rogues fall out honest men get their dues"; but even proverbs do not keep strictly to the tow-path. A purchased vote being illegal, Bryan was elected; but, for the sake of peace, the honest people of the nation will do as they did in 1876—permit an interloper to occupy the seat and draw the salary. McKinley knows that he was elected by votes bought in blocks-of-five, and were he an honest man would decline to accept the seat he got with infamy. The man who corrupts the suffrage is not the most contemptible of creatures. For beneath him is the man who receives the stolen goods, and lower yet in the scale of human degradation is the editor who applauds the act. "Triumph of national virtue and intelligence!" I wonder if the *Intelligencer* man intended that for a bit of sad irony? Is he Dean Swift or Sir Andrew Aguecheek?—a genuine humorist or only an ass? McKinley as president will not represent the people who made this nation great—who are its glory in peace and its strength in war. He will represent the syndicate which holds his notes, and the secret of his commercial crookedness; he will represent the trusts, bond jobbers and protected manufacturers who purchased the presidency purely as a business investment; he will represent the illiterate Negroes and still more illiterate Huns, Sicilians, Sandiwegians, and all the para-

sites of the plutocracy—including the editor of the *Intelligencer*. He will represent every purchasable vote between the two oceans. He will stand before the world as the incarnation of his country's degradation, the avatar of its dishonor, the epitome of its infamy—a noxious weed grown rank in a political cloaca, a moral cesspool.

* * *

AS I WAS SAYING.

M. W. CONNOLLY.

STRANGE is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the road
Which to discover we must travel too.

The revelations of devout and learned,
Who rose before us, and as prophets burned,
Are all but stories, which, awoke from sleep
They told their comrades and to sleep returned.

Macaulay it was who declared that religion is not a progressive science, that the educated man in the sixth century had all the evidence obtainable and that nothing has been contributed since Revelations were spread on papyrus or palimpsest that throws any light on the future state, or that gives any knowledge of what becomes of us when we sink into the eternal shadows and silences. The sharpened eyes of research and the increasing triumphs of inductive reasoning may make the author of the musicless "Lays of Ancient Rome" admit his error, when the case goes up for review in the land of disembodied spirits. I am not one who believes in that horror of the half-educated, higher criticism, and look forward to the time when

the Bible will be denuded of its adventitious corollaries and understood in all the alluring beauty of its majestic simplicity and divine truth. Rev. Talmage in a late sermon undertakes to tell, with charming detail and in the liveliest sort of coloring, what each will find to do in heaven, but the difference between verbosity and knowledge is still a marked one, and Brother Talmage may be ejaculating through his ecclesiastical chapeau. Rev. Parkhurst did not know he was egregiously in error when he stated that there were 250,000 married people in New York City who had smashed to smithereens the fragile Seventh Commandment, but the physical facts are against him, and these render it morally impossible for this double-action divine to be halfway right. Of course he had to crawfish out of it by saying he did not mean exactly what he said, but his success was not remarkable in this respect. The obvious fallibility of these sensational divines in dealing with the everyday affairs of life lessens faith in their dogmatical assertions about the invisible world, and the messages they bear us have much the appearance of mercantile articles that, like the green spectacles mentioned in the "Vicar of Wakefield," "were made to sell." Fortunately for the world there are sincere and scholarly men who are devoting their energies to rescuing the Bible from its manifold errors, textual and otherwise. The New York *Journal* has had a defense of Christianity by Evangelist Moody, and an attack on Christianity by Col. Ingersoll. The one is all faith and fervor; the other is all logic and incredulity. Between these warring forces there is a frontier, or *zona libre*, where real and earnest investigation may be prosecuted uninfluenced by the fires of unquestioning faith or the frosts of disbelief. Tolstoi has set himself the task of translating the four Gospels, and those who know anything of the ripe learning and industry of the creator of

Anna Karanina will not be difficult to convince that what the Count undertakes will be brought as near perfection and accuracy as possible. Tolstoi claims that the Gospel in their present shape are like a sack of rubbish in which are hidden some pearls of priceless value, and his object is to throw away the rubbish and restore the pearls to their pristine splendor. The rest of the New Testament should be revised.

The Old Testament offers a field for the judicious employment of scholarship, also. Now and then we see an enthusiastic ignoramus from the Forks of the Creek who talks about "the word," and who will tell you be believes the Bible, every word of it, from cover to cover; but no really sensible or well-informed man believes in the Old Testament, literally. No modern preacher may now talk about Genesis, and expound the Biblical account of the Creation. His congregation would laugh at him. No one believes it. No one believes that God put in six days work, and that on the seventh day he rested and called the day holy. Reason tells us that the world was not made in six days, and the records show that instead of resting on the seventh day, and making a great to do over it, God has been resting ever since. No one believes in the silly rib story, or in the whale story, or in many of the marvellous and impossible things set down in "the Sacred Scriptures." No well-informed man believes that the Old Testament is anything but a confused jumble of history, social laws, and odds and ends, and these cannot be accepted as the word of God. To any man who has ever worked about a newspaper office, the claim of the inerrancy of the Scriptures is most absurd. With all the modern improvements in the science of printing it is almost impossible to turn out a book that is perfect. What must have been the errors when there was no arbitrary method of spelling,

when orthography was a go-as-you-please game, and when all records were copied by hand? The effect to override reason and force people to accept as true what they know cannot be true has driven the more intelligent of men from active participation in church affairs. Modern religion is largely for women and children in the opinion of men, though all will not admit this to be true. The word of God is in the New Testament as it is in the fields and flowers, in the clouds, and in the voices of the night, but much of the record is so at war with common sense and common decency that it must be rejected. No man can endorse the Iliad of butcheries there recorded when God's anointed "went up against" opposing hosts and "put them to the sword, the men, the women ond the children." Spain's atrocities in Cuba are humane compared with these. Such stories are too gross for credulity. As to what errors may have crept into the translations through which the text has passed only conjecture may be employed. We know how language changes in our own day. We know how Cicero, were he on earth, would be put to it to understand a high-school harrangue in post-graduate Latin, and we can imagine the exquisite torture of Jean Baptiste Rosseau in attempting to arrive at an intelligent comprehension of modern boarding-school French. Fifty years have metamorphosed "bois de arc" into "bodock," as far as the uneducated are concerned. What will it be 6,000 years hence? This is only one illustration out of thousands that are readily discoverable by the most elementary knowledge of philology. No one now believes that King Tantalus served his son Pelops to his Olympian banqueters, or that he is still thirsting in the Tartarian gulf, immersed in a deluge of fugacious waters; neither can reasonable men believe in that cruel Mosaic mendacity which claims that God is vengeful, and that he demands an

eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. No one now believes that Ixion is bound to his wheel, revolving in a lake of fire, for casting sheep's eyes at Juno while inflamed with Jove's nectar; neither can reasoning mortals believe that a God of mercy and compassion has provided that the sins of the father shall be visited on the children of future generations. No one now believes that Io was turned into a cow, or that Atlas holds the world on his back; neither will rational beings admit that God is a newly elected alderman who requires in exchange for his favors, that he be perpetually serenaded. The record, under literal interpretation, is not only a travesty upon common intelligence, but a libel on Omnipotence.

Some of those who are exalted as models worthy of emulation and paraded as men "after God's own heart," should have been in the penitentiary. Others should have been hung had it not been that they were no worse than their neighbors. They would not rank as subalterns for morality in a company of New England free lovers, or among the savages of the South Pacific. Their lives were a saturnalia of unbridled libertinism, the monotony of which was broken at times by such diversions as assassination and murder. The treatment accorded to women by these men of God and progenitors of the Savior was intensely brutal and ungodlike. The subtile Joanadabs might lure and plot. Insatiate Amnons might forcefully deflower and throw their consanguinius victims without barred doors in defiance of the lynchers. They were protected. The potency of place and power enabled them to purchase or pilfer with immunity. The Tamars might rend their garments and weep in silence—no one cared. The women were "no better than they should be," we may well be assured, and the wonder is that they were no worse. They were not all Tamars in those days any more

than they are in these, but the tenderness and virtue of the sex are inherent when permitted to assert themselves—

Last from the Hand of God, woman is, solely,
Sweetless and light.
Turpitude comes from contagion, unholy,
Pestilent plight!
Not hers, the fierce focal fires of brute passion!
Not hers, to harbor unholy desire!

The treatment that a woman received would make a Digger Indian blush. No wonder that some of the present day representatives of the sex rebel and. emboldened by such freedom as they possess, essay the task of publishing a version of the Scriptures of their own. They have suffered long and sorely. Think of the wise man of the 700 wives and 300 concubines! A gross-bodied sensualist he, yet honored; a reprobate and a follower of false gods, yet he is applauded and exalted by the orthodox, while the women whom he befouled are condemned to this day and held responsible for his delinquincies. The songs he sung, those nymphomaniacal numbers which the church praises to itself, bear strong, indubitable interlinear evidence of having been born of phrenetic desire and sung to excite the undisciplined passions and woo to acquiescence some new found flame during bacchanalian orgies. There is not a dolorous note throughout the lyrics, or an indication of the natural remorse which a not wholly brutalized nature experiences over a contemplation of the puerperal agonies of promiscuous concupiscence. They are songs of joy, of abnormal libidinosity, of brutal ecstacy, of bestial indulgence. And this man is exalted and deified, while the women who were slaves to his lust are damned. Well, this is the old, old story, first told with quivering lips by Adam in the Garden of Eden. It is the triumph of

brute force, sanctified by popular acceptance. It is man's treatment of the weaker sex in the days when men were said to have walked with God. And so it has been—

> Since the first fierce morning of Time, with its toils and tears,
> Down through the dim, long vista of fleet and fugitive years,
> I see but the one black picture 'twixt cradle and coffin-bed.

Solomon gave the world much raptuous melody and many wise sayings—the latter probably stolen—but he has no claim to consideration or place in the category of good men. Judged by modern standards he is not the exemplar of which the youth of later ages should be emulous. We cannot forgive his cruelties and excesses because of his songs. We deal otherwise with lyrists. The Nineteenth Century imprisons a nameless one for a shameless offence who once sang:

> Surely there was a time when I might have trod
> The sun-lit heights, and from life's dissonance
> Struck one clear note to reach the ear of God.

The " wisest man " never wrote anything more sweetly tender, more sublime and beautiful. Modern scholarship should tear down these false and fictitious characters and remove from the text all the filth and rubbish with which it is encumbered. When cleansed and purified and the false philosophy, the mystifying banalities and the abscure and foolish narratives are expurgated, men can once more accept it as a guide without having their self-respect shocked, or their intelligence insulted. In its present condition the Old Testament is no more fit for the hands of young people than the most salacious and erotic of French

novels. No young person can read it and escape defilement, more or less lasting and injurious. As Gladstone said of the house of lords, "if it cannot be mended, it should be ended," and consigned to the outer limbo with the unclean books, ancient and modern, that have been banished by the law of good morals.

* * *

A WORD ABOUT WACO.

THE Providence (R. I.) *Morning Journal* presents the ICONOCLAST with a large and elaborate editorial boquet, albeit one not altogether destitute of briars. While not approving the ICONOCLAST in toto, it is surprised that aught of good can come out of "a place named Waco," views with interest "the beginning of culture" in this far distant community, and is not a little curious to know whether the Waconians understand the classical and historical allusions occasionally employed in these columns to point a moral or adorn a tale. "Waco," the *Journal* adds, in a burst of confidence, "is in the State of Texas." Whether by this remark it meant to enable its readers to locate the great and only Geyser City, or to give them an idea of the generous proportions of Texas, I know not; but certain it is that "Waco is *in* the State of Texas," not built *around* it, howsoever incredible this statement may appear to residents of Rhode Island, in the City of Providence. I have had little to say about Waco in the hitherto, taking it for granted that her name and fame had long ago reached the uttermost ends of the earth—had penetrated even the fastnesses of New England, that faithful copy of its mother country; that the home of Wherein Riggins, Jehovah Boanerges Cranfill and the Little Giant was familiar to all readers as the Roman forum or

Horatius Flaccus' Sabine farm; but alas! even the roc cannot shadow the earth with its mighty wing, nor the Great Eastern make the waves to beat on every shore. "One would not expect much from a place named Waco," says the *Journal*, while patrons of the ICONOCLAST in States even this side of the Ohio remit stamps and currency, apologizing therefor by saying they know not if Waco have a bank or is a money-order postoffice! But let us not become discouraged. There be people on earth who know not that Christ is dead, or that our Heroic Young Christian Governor hath a habitation and a name, so leaden-footed is the strumpet Fame. While in this country Chas. Dickens was introduced to Congressmen who had never heard of "Little Nell." Having mentioned Thomas Carlyle, a Kentucky editor begs to assure me that "Mr. Carlyle's name is John"! So wags the weary world. It is painful to reflect that there be people in Providence, R. I., and elsewhere, who wot not that the Little Giant once had the whole supreme court "leaning over the bar"—whether of Themis or Bacchus I disremember—listening spellbound to that flood of Websterian eloquence by which our claim to Greer County was washed away; who have forgotten, if they ever knew, that the Prohibs had a vice-presidential candidate in '92—even mistake the seat of Baylor University for an incidental fly-speck on the map of free America. But so it is. Colonel Friend brings forth the Artesia from week to week, heavyladen with dinner menu and mantua-maker Frenchification and other forms of the higher culture; Rev. Mr. Carroll chases a behoofed and behorned devil through bogs and briars, while Editor Shaw hangs to his coattails and tearfully pleads with his phrenetic brother that the elusive monster is but a pipe-dream; youthful atheists not yet well dry behind the ears, whittle paynim

spears from goose-quills, ride full tilt at the ICONOCLAST, and triumphantly bear its scalp away at their saddle-bows; dames of high degree roll hither-and-yon behind liveried coachmen; the Commercial Club ponders manufacturing enterprises until there is an audible whirr of wheels in its own head; Whereas Riggins vibrates between the forum and second-hand furniture—a Ciceronian oration in one hand and a cracked thunder-mug in the other—and insists on furnishing us "from K. to P.," while Baylor University grinds out lady missionaries to labor among the heathen horde of Hungry Hill. And still people ask if Waco is a money-order postoffice! In the expressive vernacular of the late Artemus Ward, "She am." If you doubt it, take out an accident policy and ask Col. Harrison. For the information of the effete East, the ICONOCLAST will state that while the present population of Waco is a trifle less than that of London, the city has greater room in which to grow; and as her people are chiefly of the Baptist breed, the natural increase must ere long place her at the head of the procession. Waco, we would have you know, is the religious storm-centre of the Universe, and one of the few places that licenses prostitutes—a fact for the consideration of students of cause and effect. Well supplied with pure artesian water, a saloon in every block, a church around every corner and a fire or failure every day, Waco is indeed a land flowing with milk and honey—a place

"Where every prospect pleases and only man is vile."

Her streets are so smooth that a mountain goat can traverse them with comparative ease, and so clean that it is seldom a mule gets lost in the mud. The tax rate is so low that if your property be well located you can usually persuade the collector to accept it as partial pay-

ment. Being deeply religious, Waco takes her business motto from the Bible: "He that provideth not for his own household is worse than an infidel"—which means that in cases of commercial collapse the foreign creditor doesn't get a dollar. While Waconian culture has not yet reached the eyther and nyther stage, it has more than "made a beginning." The fandango has been succeeded by the german, the neck-tie sociable by progressive euchre and the song of the six-shooter by the libel suit. That we are making rapid progress is evidenced that the fact that a tree on which only 37 men have been hanged, is now regarded with a species of awe by the younger natives. Of course Waco, like other places, has its drawbacks; but, taken by-and-large, there is no better. While it is true that you cannot secure a bath, shave or clean shirt here on Sunday, the saloons and churches are open, and the Reservation hath all seasons for its own. Waco's good people are not quite all in the cemetery. It boasts two or three society woman who do not chew gum, straddle a bike nor drink gin rickeys. There be several men here who could safely be left alone with a blind orphan girl, or a corpse whose eyes were covered with coppers. Though the *Journal* be lanista-taught, he might find among Waco's professional men those capable of giving him exercise enough in the intellectual arena. Should he become aweary of going over into Massachusetts to turn around, of wearing icicles in his whiskers six months in the year and inhaling city soot mixed with clammy fog in lieu of atmosphere, let him come to Texas where there is room for expansion, and grind out his midwinter "coppee"—as I do this—by an open window, through which streams a golden shower brighter than desiring Zeus poured into Danæ's prison—the day-god's benediction, heavy with the fragrance of rose and honeysuckle and

pulsing with the mock-bird's vesper song. Why "grunt and sweat under a weary life," and watch hungry and hollow-eyed for the ghost to walk, when 1314 real estate agents stand ready to prove to you that the unearned increment of a suburban lot, only seventeen miles from the center of this city, would retrive the fallen fortunes of the Man of Uz and transform the dogs of Lazarus into the menials of Dives! Come, snow-birdie, come, and live with me, in a city fairer than hasheesh vision, and where you can find a new enterprise every hour into which you have but to drop your patrimony to pocket large profits. All trains stop at Waco. You will recognize the place by a structure which resembles a Kansas section-house that had been held by the vandal Time while criminally assaulted by a cyclone. You will see a youth wearing a large McKinley smile standing in the foreground suggestive of Life sporting at the gates of Death, or a morning sunbeam shedding a mellow radiance on a cypress bough. It is Smith—not Capt. John Smith, but Col. Katy Smith. He will tell you that you are in Waco, in the august presence of a daypo that is the envy of the Olympian Gods. If you doubt it, observe the turnouts that hover on the leeward side of the majestic pile. If you there see a long array of Ben Franklin carriages in the last stages of senescence, and all the contemporaries of Rozinante, you may order your canes and collar-box carried to the Pacific Hotel, a building of mediæval times, under the management of J. I. Moore, whose sad sweet smile reconciles heady youths to the thought that we all must die. You will probably expect to see inscribed over the portals, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here," but the legend of despair has been erased by the gnawing tooth of Time. The depot, the ride over a corduroy road in Noah's ark, and the Dantean face of your landlord will probably breed

a frantic desire to take the next train to the Bad Lands, or flee to a second-hand cemetery, where more cheerful surroundings will purge you of *maladie du pays;* but the feeling will gradually wear away as the beauties of the city unfold themselves, the glorious climate begins to get next you, you find that both the religion and liquor are orthodox, and the lordly strut of the Little Giant recalls to your mind Æsop's fable of the frog. Some day the Katy is going to build a depot that will harmonize with Col. Smith's vest, and the town will have a hotel that will not be mistaken for a hide-house. Some day we'll have streets that wouldn't wreck the Deacon's One Hoss Shay in a week. Some day we'll bury the hypocritical mossbacks who have long played Old Man of the Sea to Waco's Sinbad—snivelling about their Jesus while cutting the throat of the town with a cold-blooded villainy that makes every man possessing a dollar afraid to pass through the place with the car windows open. Some day.

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FATHER BRANNAN VS. WILLIAMSON.

Cincinnati, Dec. 13, '96.

Dear Brann: I am no A. P. A., but was raised a Catholic and know more about Catholicism than you ever will know. If you admire Jesuits and nuns, why don't you become a believer in the infallibility of the Pope? Six Popes issued bulls against witchcraft, whereby they became the real instigators of witchcraft-persecution that caused the torture and burning alive of hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Those bulls were "ex cathedra" doctrine. You don't know much about nuns. They go into convents because they can't get married; or because they are too cowardly to fight the battle of life,

to struggle for existence. You admire nuns because they are nurses in hospitals, etc. Don't you know that thousands are waiting for a place (like a nurse) in a hospital, or anywhere else? Don't you know that it is considered good luck to get similar positions? If you would not be a Papal hireling, you would know and write that Catholic nuns build hospitals and orphan asylums only because they can beg for money easier; thereby feeding and enriching themselves and priests and bishops and Popes. Nuns are the unhappiest creatures after the first few years of enthusiasm have passed away. I may also mention the fact that no girl without money is admitted into a convent. There you see the finger of Rome—money! A convent is a real penitentiary; gloom and despair the lot of most victims. Don't you know that the most effective and destructive enemies of Popery and priestcraft were raised and educated in Catholicism? Voltaire was educated by Jesuits; Theodore Parker was a Catholic; Luther and Bruno were monks; Napoleon was a Catholic, and abolished the Spanish Inquisition and played ball with the Pope; Joseph II of Austria, a Catholic, confiscated the property of convents and churches; so did Catholic Bavaria. Munich, a Catholic city, sent two socialists to Parliament in Berlin for many years past (German Parliament—Reichstag). Socialists, though, are materialists, infidels, glorious atheists because they believe in humanity, not gods. Where, now, is your Gibraltar of Catholicism? Where was your Gibraltar of the Catholic church in the First French Revolution when priests were killed by the hundreds like mad dogs?

BEN WILLIAMSON.

The letter of Mr. Williamson has been submitted to me by the Editor of the ICONOCLAST, with the request that I

answer it. To answer him fully would occupy too much of my time, which I can employ to better advantage, and also too much space in the ICONOCLAST, which can be used more profitably.

He says six Popes issued bulls against witchcraft, etc. Which were the six Popes and the dates of their issuance? This man so hates the Popes that he mentions no one else in connection with witchcraft. The idea is implied that Protestants ignored the subject completely. The belief was thoroughly current in Protestant England, which is indicated in many works of dramatists in the Elizabethan era, including the great Shakespeare himself, who, however, was not a Protestant. It is a very ancient thing, and a chapter of the code of Justinian deals exclusively with the subject. It is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament it is mentioned in 1 Sam., 15 c, 23; 2 Chron., 33 c, 6. Exodus, 22 c, 18, and several other places; and by St. Paul in Galatians, 5 c., 20.

It was an indictable offense at common law, and made a felony by an Act of Henry VIII. In the time of Elizabeth (not a Catholic) it was made a felony without benefit of clergy and punished by death. So great a lawyer as Sir Matthew Hale believed in it. Selden, Coke and Bacon, all eminent lawyers, believed in it, and Mr. Blackstone said that its elimination from the category of crimes was not to be taken as a negative of the possibility of such an offense, though he would not give credit to any particular *modern* instance. Even Luther, favorably alluded to by Mr. Williamson, believed in witchcraft. So also the Protestant Puritans of New England in the U. S. The devil, of whose existence I have no more doubt than of the existence of God, has many ways of magnifying his Protean powers. The evidence of his possession of some people is manifested by a virulent hatred of the "Old

Pope" and the Catholic church, calumny of the Sisters of Charity, and the denial of the existence of a God. That's the shape in which he has Mr. Williamson; and if the devil has any special favorites in this world, and I am satisfied he has, the guerdon of excellence will be awarded to those who deny the existence of Him whom the devil hates but cannot deny himself.

He says "the Sisters go into convents because they can't get married, or are too cowardly to fight the battle of life, etc." The cruel malignity of this infamous accusation! It would paralyze the genius of the English language to furnish suitable phraseology to express my fathomless contempt for any man who would make such a brutal charge against woman. This malignant and loathsome defamer says in one place that they go into convents because they are too cowardly to fight the battle of life, and immediately after says that no girl who has not money can get into a convent at all. His black calumny has overleaped itself, and he makes one assertion cut the throat of the other. A girl with money can fight the battle of life anywhere, and it is an important element in this utilitarian age in enhancing matrimonial opportunities. Besides, he says, the convent is a penitentiary, and yet girls pay money for the privilege of being "victims of gloom and despair." Mr. Williamson possesses a unique interest from the fact that most men who are liars are so from one point of view; but this man proves himself to be the chief apostle of Ananias from every point of observation.

Women who leave parents and friends, home and kindred, devoting their lives in zealous fidelity to the physical and spiritual interests of others, nursing the sick, feeding the orphan, comforting the widow, reclaiming the outcast, blunting the sting of melancholy, gilding the gloom of sorrow and painting the fragrant rose of hope in the

wilderness of despair, often ending their lives, which have been lived for others, by fearlessly entering the portals of deadly contagion, and in their efforts to subdue the fierceness of the great monarch of desolation, have become willing victims of his devouring wrath. Are such women cowards?

It has been said:

> "That whether on the scaffold high
> Or in the battle's van:
> The noblest place for man to die,
> Is where he dies for man."

Measured by this criterion, in what vocabulary can we find language that would fitly damn a man to eternal infamy for calling her a coward who would even risk her own life to save that of her impious traducer?

He says: "Don't you know the most effective and destructive enemies of Popery and priestcraft were raised in Catholicism?" We likewise know that the most effective and destructive enemy of Jesus Christ was one of His Apostles. He talks about the cruel treatment of the Pope by Napoleon. What became of Napoleon after that? He was dragged down from the empyrean of power and aggrandizement to unsounded depths of humiliation and degradation. The poet Byron said of the hero of Marengo and the genius of Austerliz when at St. Helena:

> "'Tis done! but yesterday a king
> And armed with kings to strive;
> And now thou art a nameless thing,
> So abject, yet alive."

The Pope whom he had imprisoned said this to him after being offered a cockade through Gen. Berthier, as a French symbol and as a compliment: "Sir, I can accept no orna-

ments except those with which the church invests me, the pastoral staff and this little crown on my head. And remember although you may at present throw down the ornaments of the living and uproot the tombs of the dead, you will soon be confined to the grave, and this little crook and this crown I wear will govern the universal earth when your name and race and power are forgotten amongst men."

He tells us of the exploits of some bad Catholics. A Catholic may go to the devil like anyone else if he wants to, and they very often do so. Mr. Williamson is a living exemplification of this truth.

He says priests were killed like dogs during the French Revolution. So were Jesus Christ and eleven of the twelve Apostles.

Mr. Williamson, by implication, says he is a materialist, an infidel, and a "glorious atheist"; that is, he don't believe in spiritual existences, he has no faith, and he dare not believe in any God.

He says in his letter that Napoleon played ball with the Pope. Whether he did or not, in the sense meant by Mr. Williamson, is open to question; but there is no doubt whatever that the devil has got everything fixed up to play hell with Mr. Williamson.

P. F. Brannan.

Weatherford, Tex., Dec. 21, 1896.

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LEGISLATIVE LIMNINGS.

It has been said that some were born for great things and some were born for small; which may explain why a majority of the members of the Texas House of Representatives were born at all. This alleged honorable body

permitted itself to be smoothly "worked" by the gentlemen who are speculating in the brains of W. J. Bryan, and consented to save them a hundred dollars or so by granting them free use of the hall for a lecture by the great Nebraskian. This, on the surface, looked like a graceful compliment paid the national leader of a party, and should have been permitted to go at that; but the smart Alec is irrepressible. Mr. Henderson, the member from Somewhere—and who does not appear to have been toddied and taffied by Manager Comstock—offered a resolution to the effect that, having been accorded free use of the hall, Mr. Bryan should deliver a free lecture. Of course Mr. Henderson knew, if he knows anything—which appears extremely problematical—that, as Mr. Bryan lectures under contracts, the free use of the hall could not save him a cent. The members were not idiotic enough to adopt the Henderson resolution; but they proceeded to advertise the microscopic dimensions of their souls by rescinding their former resolution and offering the use of the hall—which is public property—to Mr. Comstock for 107 tickets of admission for themselves! Whether he accepted this remarkable business proposition I am not at the present writing informed; but the equivalent of $107 for one night's use of the hall having the worst acoustic properties of any in the world, is certainly a pretty stiff price. I have often thought that the man who designed that hall was a genius, for he succeeded admirably in protecting the members from the ennui incident to each other's oratory. Men who think rapidly speak rapidly, and rapid speech in the Texas Hall of Representatives were equivalent to pouring buckshot into a tin boiler. If Bryan is inveigled into the place he will probably seize the earliest opportunity to quietly murder his manager. In attempting to trade the use of public

property for lecture tickets—which they easily dispose of for a dollar apiece—the Texas misrepresentatives have been guilty of the smallest piece of business of any nomorhetic body on record. I am not up in legislative ethics; but it seems to me that a man who could vote for such a resolution would steal "stiffs" from his own family burial lot, sell them to a medical college and spend the proceeds in riotous living. Of course I may be mistaken. There be men who think it "cute" to steal a hundred-dollar dog, who would be horrified at the thought of misappropriating a dime. Members of legislative bodies who profess to be gentlemen, and have much to say about their "honor," will ride on free railway passes, then charge full mileage up to a poverty-stricken people —will spend days at home attending to private business, then cooly pocket their per diem.

. . .

There has been a great deal said pro and con in the past anent the propriety of public servants accepting railway passes. These gentlemen have replied with fine scorn to the suggestion that their votes could be influenced by such "courtesies;" but it seems to me that the legislator who charges up to the state railway fare which he does not pay, is the same kind of a thief as the traveling representative of a commercial house who "pads" his expense account for his personal benefit. Why do railway managers give free transportation to congressmen and members of state legislatures? Corporations are said to have no souls, and certain it is that railway companies have seldom become distinguished for their philanthropy. They regard the issuance of free passes to law-makers as purely as business investment. These passes, be it remembered, are not "trips" from the member's home to the state capital and return; they are "annuals" good

over the entire line and every day in the year. A man with a dozen "annuals" in his pocket is apt to feel quite kindly towards the corporations from which he received such substantial "courtesies." The Pullman Sleeping Car Co. is usually considered a hard institution to "work;" yet I have seen members of former Texas legislatures demand and receive passes for themselves and their families. The experienced law-thinker knows how to bring such contumacious concerns to time. All that is necessary is to introduce a little bill—or have the press correspondents give it out that one is in preparation "which seems to be regarded with much favor"—that puts a crimp in their privileges, and forthwith managers and superintendents hasten to the state capital to protest against its passage—and incidentally stock the honorable gentlemen up with the coveted "courtesies." Thus is the corporation cat skinned, not in Texas alone, but at many another capital. Missouri and Kansas Solons are adepts in this art. The fact is that no man qualified to frame laws for a state can afford to give his time for the money offered and remain absolutely honest. What kind of lawyers, doctors, bankers, merchants or newspaper men can you employ at $5 per day? Certainly nothing above the grade of chicken-court attorneys, "yarb" doctors, faro dealers, peanut merchants and scissor editors; yet a majority of the American states fill their legislative halls with men who feel that they can afford to spend two or three months log-rolling for a two-or three months' job that pays $5 per day, during which time they must maintain themselves in a distant city! Some very able men seek these poorly paid employments. A few may be actuated by patriotism; others regard it as a stepping stone to greater political preferment; but how many are either the paid agents of corporations and schemers who

want a friend at court, or understand the esoteric art of "making politics pay?"

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The lower house of the Texas legislature, in a sudden economic convulsion, fixed salaries of its clerks at $4 per day instead of $5, as paid its predecessors. Whether the senate has followed suit I am not informed. Nor have I heard of any radical reduction by either house in the $5 per diem usually paid door-keepers for sitting on their hunkers and looking at the people who pass in and out, and sergeant-at-arms for services that would be considered a soft snap by a $60-a-month policeman. The house has fixed the remuneration of pages at $2 instead of the usual $3 per day, for rushing ice water to perspiring orators, galloping to the speaker's desk with amendments to somewhat by the gentleman from Somewhere, and wonderful bills by the member from Wayback. I trust that the Senate has followed this example, which is good —as far as it goes. Had the House reduced the pay of its Clerks to $15 a week, the service rendered and the salary received would have been much nearer a parity. Legislative employments, not only in Texas, but in most other American states, are almost invariably used by the victor in the discharge of political debts. The competency of applicants for responsible positions is scarce considered, and the result is that so-called "clerical-errors" often invalidate important laws. Two or three men are generally retained to do the work of one. The salaries paid are usually double-often-sextuple—what any private employer would pay for similar services. Boys who would be glad to get $2 per week as "cash" or "front" are allowed $2, or $3 per day from the public purse. I have seen the 9-year-old son of a Texas legislator drawing $3 per day as page—a scurvy little brat who lacked sufficient

sense to keep his own nose clean—while on the streets grown men were asking employment at any price. People utterly ignorant of clerical work—but first rate political "heelers"—are given employment at double the wages of expert copyists and accountants. Every legislative body from the common council of a fourth-rate city to the United States senate, is liberal at the expense of the public. The ICONOCLAST is an advocate of high wages, but only when founded on merit instead of political favoritism. Only principles have a right to exercise that generosity which pays more than the market price, or permits a noncompetent to play at serving as an excuse for sugar-coating charity by calling it salary. It is the province of the agent to guard with scrupulous fidelity the interests of his employer—a fact which our public servants too often forget.

* * *

SALMAGUNDI.

The lynching of a buck negro at Bryan, Texas, for the outrage of a young white girl, has, as might have been expected, aroused the ire of that confirmed negro-maniac, the *Dal-Gal News*. This is the paper that once complimented coons for eulogizing Fred Douglass, the saddle-colored miscegenationist, as the equal of Washington, and declaring that they too wanted white wives. It demands that those who participated in the Bryan neck-tie sociable be punished with death; but it is not likely that its frantic desire to pour libations of Caucasian gore to the names of a black-rape-fiend will be gratified. That the negro was guilty there can be no more doubt than though he had been condemned by the courts. He deserved to die, and he is dead. Instead of his punishment cost-

ing the county a thousand dollars or so, the expenses total was a hempen cord. A great deal of nonsensical gush is indulged in by ye able editors, in Texas and elsewhere, anent the prevalence of lynch law. They are industriously at work trying to remove an affect without applying themselves to the cause, which is simply lack of necessary protection afforded by the courts. They demand laws that will put lynchers in the penitentiary or punish them with death. They want a heavy fine laid upon counties in which such lawlessness occurs. They urge the removal of sheriffs who refuse to shoot down their neighbors and friends to protect a scurvy lecher who has forfeited his life. They rave over the "outraged dignity of the commonwealth" as tho' it were a sin against the Holy Ghost to kill a rape-fiend wherever found—to protect by any means the honor of the home from these imps of hell. Such idiots ought to be hung up by the heels to induce a rush of brains to the head. Just so long as men esteem womanly virtue, and women are deflowered by force; just so long as men form friendships and their friends are slain by unconscionable cowards; just so long as honor and life are wantonly sacrificed by brutish enemies to society, the rifle will continue to crack, the gallows-tree to bear its gruesome fruit and living flesh to hiss in the avenging fire. Forge your laws with links of steel and rivets of brass; "crown the outrage dignity of the State with the crested and fateful terror of death," and add thereto the nameless horrors of the damned, and you cannot withhold the hand of Southern chivalry from the throat of that monster who despoils a maid. The News, and all other pleaders for the precious lives of rapists to the contrary, such wretches have absolutely no right which society is bound to respect. When caught, and their guilt established, be-

yond the peradventure of a doubt, let them die, and in the manner best calculated to strike terror to their kind. True, the mob may sometimes be mistaken; but where we hear of one blunder by Judge Lynch we hear of a hundred by the courts. When a ravisher falls into the hands of a mob he is not sent to a comfortable prison to have his health cared for, to be better housed, clothed and fed than millions of honest men. He doesn't get a five-year sentence for a crime deserving of death. There are no costly mistrials, no continuances that witnesses may have time to move away, no reversals of just verdicts on puerile technicalities, no loopholes in the law through which he may be slipped by a shrewd attorney for a valuable consideration. Berate Judge Lynch as we may, he is the only power that stands between the lustful spawn of Ham and the honor of Southern homes. And there he will stand until an efficient substitute is found—stand despite the mawkish tears and frantic prayers, the empty threats and harmless curses of those who value a lustful Ethiope's life above a woman's virtue. This can be effected only by the exercise of that rarest of all human attributes, a little practical common sense. Our judges are, for the most part, able and honest and our constabulary efficient; but they are compelled to work with a clumsy machine that defeats their efforts. We have too many criminal laws founded, not upon the rights of man or the needs of society, but on religious prejudices or paternal folly. A law that has not the support of public opinion cannot be enforced, is a dead letter—"a mildewed ear blasting its wholesome brother." It fosters contempt for all law and should be obliterated. By purging our criminal statutes of the plunder with which they have been encumbered by the Reubells and other mischievous Meddlesome Matties playing at celestial policemen,

lopping away all confusing verbiage, simplifying procedure, abolishing the unit rule in the jury-room and returning to the ancient English custom of selecting as jurors intelligent men who know most instead of lunatics who know least about the case, we might succeed in winning public confidence for our courts and materially lessening the labors of Judge Lynch.

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If John Grant fails to secure that cabinet portfolio he should find no difficulty in disposing of his certificates, testimonials, etc., to a patent medicine firm.

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The Dal-Gal *News* occasionally says a really good thing. Its recent editorial entitled, "An Indignity to Dallas Patriots," was a finer piece of humor than ever appeared in Puck, albeit I fear the "Patriots" aforesaid did not find it particularly funny. It would have been much better, however, without its string of jaw-breakers. Melanocomous, multiliquous, sanguinaceous, flavicomous, etc., are words that do very well for the penetralia of Boston, but should be sawed up and fed to Texas on the monthly installment plan. Furthermore, the *News* editor has used them so often as to lay himself open to the suspicion that, like the solemn old swindler in the Vicar of Wakefield, he has got by rote a string of resounding nonsense which he works off on every occasion to impress the simple-minded with his learning—and is then "at the end of his Latin."

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Representative Reubell wants to prohibit the playing of even social games of foot and baseball on Sunday. The gentleman from Grayson was born two centuries after his time. He is a New England atavism, a reincarnation of some old-time Puritan who "peached" on his

own brother for whistling Yankee Doodle on the Sabbath day. I'm sure of it—will gamble 16 to 1 that his umbilical region is blue as an indigo bag. Mr. Reubell has "got the misery" in his mentality. His God is a God of Gloom and his religion a symphony of groans. The existence of such men in the Nineteenth century casts a shadow on the sun.

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THE WORKING WOMAN.

JULIA TRUITT BISHOP.

I HAD somewhat to say in the December ICONOCLAST about the business woman;—the woman who enters the field of work with no necessity impelling her, and plays at "business" while she keeps needier women out of employment. But there is a great army of workers, so different in their needs and in their manner of working that the difference grows pathetic when one comes to study it impartially. I am aware that this question has been discussed until the mere mention of it calls up a smile, and the writer who turns his pen in that direction is regarded as a fool, dealing with an outworn theme; but so long as there are working women with whom the world deals so unjustly, I will still undertake to write for them and of them.

In every city the vanguard of the army starts out on its march by break of day, eager to reach the factory before the whistle blows. You would see them, if you were up early enough, hurrying along the streets while your servants are still asleep, to stand all day beside the loom or at the bench, and to drag their weary feet home after dark; for which work they will receive something

like three dollars a week. The next division of the great army is abroad something after seven o'clock, and is on its way to the stores, to stand behind the counters from 7:30 in the morning until five in the evening, for stipends varying from twelve to twenty dollars a month, or in case of extreme proficiency reaching as high as twenty-five. Between eight and nine come the girls who work in the offices, as stenographers and typewriters or book-keepers, and they must be in their places by 8:30 and a few of them are not expected to leave until four o'clock at least.

It need hardly be said that these women are honest—for if they were not they would surely never dream of doing such work for such pay. They are almost universally neat in dress; they are punctually in their places through all kinds of weather; they can always be depended upon, for they have no habits of intemperance to detract from their usefulness. They are careful and methodical, as men seldom are, for women have the patience which enables them to give close attention to details. Add to this, that they are proud of their work, and have an enthusiasm which makes them do their very best. They learn early in the day that their work must be done as well as a man's work could be under similar circumstances, and that they are to expect no consideration because they are women. And yet you will hear men declaim bitterly against these working-women—"They have ruined business for themselves as well as for us;"—this is one of the stock arguments brought forward by the man-out-of-work on all occasions. They point to women who are keeping books for forty or fifty dollars a month where a man would get a hundred; and they are not slow to say that women, in their eagerness to get work, are quick to take the first salary that is offered; or that they are merely working for a little pin-money, and do not care what

other individual is thrown out of employment or is mulcted of his just hire through their instrumentality. Poor, old, threadbare arguments, dragged forward every day, and as untrue now as when first uttered. The melancholy truth is that women and girls who go out from home to work, really to work, are driven by the bitterest need. The daughter sees her father's strength failing, and she cannot sit and leave him to bear all the burden; so she slips into a place in store or factory, and works like a slave there, giving up all the brightness and pleasure that girlhood loves best; or the father goes down in the struggle and the daughter takes his place as breadwinner for the mother and the helpless little ones; or the mother herself is left to fight her battle alone, and she must go out to work that she may keep a roof over the heads of the children. Deep, unselfish, devoted love throbs at the hearts of these women who are out in the fields as "working women," and the same love that prompts them, the same bitter need that forces them out leaves them no choice as to work or wages.

A man, seeking for employment, can afford to turn on his heel and walk out when a salary is offered him which he thinks too small. If he cannot find work at one place he will another, and in the meantime he can wait. Men have that happy independence, that multiplicity of resources which makes all things possible to them. But what women, helpless with the thought of those others dependent upon her, dares turn away when an offer of work is made her. Will she not work for twenty, thirty, forty dollars a month? All right—there are hundreds who will. They are waiting there behind her, a long row of them, with haggard desperation in their faces; for of all the helpless creatures beneath the sun there is none other so wretchedly helpless as the woman

who must work and for whom there is no work to do. And so, driven as they are, the employer has but to set his price and he may be sure of having a full complement of workers. No wonder that their work is cheap! No wonder that the employer, needing a sales-girl or stenographer, has but to insert a notice in the morning paper to have dozens of applicants waiting on the sidewalk before the doors are opened; for this cheapened labor, this hard work so poorly rewarded, begets ever new misery and drives a greater and still greater number of women into the ranks of workers, for whom the employer will cheapen wages still more because the number of workers has grown larger. The scheme works well, we may be sure. It is a kind of endless chain, which winds up an ever increasing army of women into helplessness; but it will not be forgotten that the employer grows richer as he pays smaller and still smaller wages. Salesgirls stand almost shoulder to shoulder behind his counters, and yet his expenses are smaller than in the old days when he employed half the number of men; and it shall go hard with him but they shall grow still less, for the number of women out-of-work is increasing, and in a little while he can employ them at practically nothing. I have said that the complaints are loud and long from men whose work lies in the same field. "These girls are defrauding themselves and us," is the universal cry. "They could just as easily get a decent salary if they would only stand up for it, and that would result in the survival of the fittest. Only the best would get employment and then there would not be so many men thrown out of employment unjustly." All this sounds very plausible. Ah, but they are sophists, these men! Let one of them prosper for a season and open business for himself, and come to need employes of his own, and then does he send out and hire men to keep his

books at a salary of seventy-five or a hundred dollars a month? Nay, nay! There is a lady on his payroll at thirty or forty dollars, and as soon as he can find a cheaper one he will let this one go. And then, suppose, that by some monstrous upheaval of things working women should summon courage to demand salaries somewhat approaching those ordinarily paid to men for the same work? Why, then would this same employer retort, "Oh no! If I must pay such a price as that I would prefer to employ men!" And so the sad fact remains that even were organization possible among working women its first effect would be to defeat all the ends which could make organization valuable. And the grim necessities which compel them to work make organization impossible. A young girl with a sick mother and a brood of younger children to care for could not refuse employment because the price offered was less than that agreed upon by her "Union." Hunger and want are stern taskmasters, and make a coward of any woman whom they drive to work. And this is what has come upon working women in these latter days! It is false and unjust to say that they have cheapened labor. They have had it cheapened for them, cheapened in spite of them, until their condition grows more helpless from year to year. They are doing a man's work and receiving a woman's wages, and while that distinction remains, while such an expression is left in the world, we have not much to boast of in the way of progress, and can lay little claim to ordinary humanity. I have looked upon some strange things during the years of my newspaper work. I have seen all the young girl employes of a large and fashionable store receiving $15 a month, each, while their employer spent his leisurely summers dawdling about European watering places. Fifteen dollars a month, and they were but young girls, and temptations lay thick along the pathway of

more than one. Fifteen dollars a month, and those who boarded were forced to pay every cent of that money for the poorest fare, while four of them occupied one room! Fifteen dollars a month, and there were several who were the only breadwinners of the family! Fifteen dollars a month—and the employer set the price, and could turn away those who refused to take it; and yet he could sleep at night, and could spend his thousands every month, earned by the labor of these slaves!

And what was before them?

But that is not all; for I have seen a faithful young stenographer working for a salary of twenty dollars a month, and walking thirty blocks night and morning, because she could not afford to pay carfare. If she had given up the work there were others who would have taken it; and she did not dare to let it go, for others were driven by the same grim need that drove her. More than that; I have seen another stenographer, thoroughly educated and a fine linguist, with years of careful culture back of her mere course in stenography, doing all the home and foreign correspondence of a busy firm, and receiving for that work the princely sum of nine dollars a week—a sum which would not have paid her tuition in any one month of her school course. It was what she was offered, and she could not refuse. More than that, even: I have seen a business man advertise for a stenographer with a machine of her own, offering $25 a month, and when I went to see what the answer would be, I found seventeen tired and haggard girls waiting for the great man's doors to be opened!

And the remedy? Alas, there is none! The working women are powerless to change the order of things; they have been constantly crowding it down to a lower and still lower notch; but now the only hope is in the employers

themselves. It cannot be but that there is still some manhood left in them, and they will stop and think after awhile. It cannot be that they will always try to enrich themselves by doling out starvation wages for faithful work, by snatching every extra crust from hollow-eyed children; by stealing the coals that were needed for the widow's hearthstone, and calling their mean action "business acumen" and "practical common sense." It is contemptible work, and though it may go unavenged for awhile, "the years are seldom unjust." Prosperity gained at the expense of half-paid employes will do its possessor little good in the end. Even though one hand gives to charity while the other wrings from the toil-worn lives of working women, the giver is none the less contemptible and deserving the scorn of the world. But there is hope—there is always hope—and in the fulness of time even Scrooge & Marley will relent; and the working woman will grow less haggard, and will dare to smile a greeting to every day that comes.

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SMASHING THE IDOL-SMASHER.

Mr. Brann: Your use of slang is not only in bad taste, but indicates a sad lack of native force, which you strive to conceal by these gaucheries. Personalities betray the little mind and are never used by writers of eminence. "Measures, not men," is the watchword of the true reformer.

A. A.

Peccavi!—which you will find by referring to the stub-end of the dictionary, means, "I have sinned." But it occurs to me that while dancing the Carmagnole on the literary and ethical ideals of "A. A." and others who

have written *to* or *of* me in a similar vein, I have kept reasonably good company. Victor Hugo so offended the Miss Nancys and mawkish purists of France by the use of slang that he thought it worth while to devote a dozen pages of his masterpiece in defense of the practice. I had not suspected that the man who painted the Battle of Waterloo with words as no artist ever can with pigments, was sadly deficient in "native force." I had hitherto supposed that "Junius" and Dr. Johnson were writers of some "eminence"—that Byron and Pope were not to be despised; but it seems that I was mistaken, for all were addicted to those personalities which "betray the little mind." "The Dunciad" and "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" were personal "roasts" that filled the atmosphere with the odor of burning flesh. "Junius" says: "'Measures and not men' is the common cant of affected moderation;—a base counterfeit language, *fabricated by knaves and made current by fools.*" In his letter to Dr. Arbuthnot, Pope says: "To reform and not chastise I am afraid is impossible. . . . To attack vice in the abstract, without touching persons, may be *safe* fighting indeed, but *it is fighting with shadows.* The fame of Demosthenes rests upon his Philippics. Catullus cauterized. Carlyle cut to the red, and MacCaulay made "the bleed come," whenever he encountered a rogue. There are offenses that cannot be reached by criminal statutes, and rascals whose wealth or influence enables them to set the laws at defiance. All such would go unwhipped of justice were all authors and orators such milk-and-water hermaphrodites as my correspondent.